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While Israel govt. wants war, most Israelis don't

Surveys suggest citizens fear impact on economy

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TURNING IT AROUND

Dube and Dhoni help CSK snap losing streak

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NEARBY

Truckers' strike begins in State

BENGALURU
Truck operators across Karnataka launched an indefinite strike from midnight on Monday, demanding a rollback of the recent diesel price hike and a reduction in toll charges. The protest is expected to bring the movement of goods across the State to a near standstill.
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Indian students in U.S. worried

BENGALURU
Indian students studying in the U.S. are anxious about their future as the Donald Trump administration has announced a slew of amendments to existing educational and economical policies. » PAGE 2

Violence rocks Bengal's Bhangar over Waqf Act

Vehicles were torched, police personnel attacked during protest in South 24 Parganas district; police report over 200 arrests in Murshidabad, as people who had fled are now returning home

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Violence erupted in Bhangar in South 24 Parganas in West Bengal on Monday during protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, even as violence-affected areas in the State's Murshidabad district were slowly limping back to normalcy with no major incident reported in the past 36 hours.

The violence erupted during protests by a gathering called by Indian Secular Front leader and MLA Nawshad Siddique. A mob attacked police personnel and set five motorbikes used by the police on fire in the Sonepur bazaar area of Bhangar. A prison van was attacked, and some police personnel sustained injuries in the violence and stone throwing.

Spreading unrest: A videograb of a vehicle vandalised during protests in Bhangar on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

200 arrested

Earlier in the day, Jawed Shamim, Additional Director-General of Police (Law and Order), said that no major violence was reported in Murshidabad and the number of the arrested crossed 200. Mr. Shamim said that the process to return people who fled their homes in the violence-affected areas and took shelter in Malda district had started.

The police officer said that 100-200 people fled the area by crossing a river and took shelter in a school at Baishnabnagar in Malda district.

Opposition parties, particularly the Bharatiya Janata Party, alleged that about 400 people from Murshidabad fled their homes to escape violence. BJP State president Sukanta Majumdar visited one of the camps on Monday. He said that women at the camp complained that their homes were torched and their properties were destroyed.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee appealed for peace and said people can hold protests after obtaining permission. She urged people to restrain themselves against provocation.

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Choksi arrested in Belgium amid India's extradition bid

Suhasini Haidar
Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

Belgian authorities confirmed on Monday that they have Mehul Choksi, the fugitive diamond businessman, in custody after he was arrested over the weekend.

He is wanted, along with his nephew Nirav Modi, in a case by Punjab National Bank alleging loan frauds worth more than ₹13,578 crore. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been pursuing his extradition since 2018, when he left the country.

Mr. Choksi is an Antiguan citizen now, and had moved to Belgium a few years ago, reportedly for cancer treatment. He was arrested near his home in Antwerp. As per reports, he secured a Belgian residency permit in November 2023, as his wife is a Belgian citizen. In a petition filed with a special court in Mumbai in February this year, Mr. Choksi had provided medical documents that said he was suffering from chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (blood cancer) and was unable to travel.

"[Mr. Choksi] is being detained in anticipation of further judicial proceedings. Access to his legal counsel has been assured," the Belgian Federal Public Service of Justice or Justice department told *The Hindu* in a written statement.

"We can confirm that the Indian authorities have introduced an extradition request for Mr. Choksi," it added. Mr. Choksi's case is due to come up in Belgian courts next week.

This is not the first time he is facing an extradition trial. In 2021, a court in Dominica had dismissed a CBI petition for his extradition.

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'FREEDOM REQUEST'
» PAGE 10

Fraud fallout

An overview of the Mehul Choksi case

Bank fraud: Mehul Choksi and Nirav Modi defrauded Punjab National Bank of ₹13,578 crore using fake credit instruments and shell companies

Tactical escape: The accused fled India in January 2018, just before the CBI registered its first case in the banking scam

Arrest in Dominica: Choksi was arrested in Dominica in 2021; he claimed abduction. Interpol withdrew its Red Notice in March 2023

Mehul Choksi. ANI

Latest arrest: On April 12, 2025, Belgian authorities arrested Choksi after India renewed extradition efforts

Telangana formalises categorisation of SCs

M. Rajeev
HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has notified the implementation of the Telangana Scheduled Castes (Rationalisation of Reservations) Act 2025. The State has issued a Gazette notification with April 14, 2025 as the appointed day for categorisation of Scheduled Castes (SC) into three groups.

Telangana has become the first State in the country to operationalise classification of Scheduled Castes after the Supreme Court's landmark judgment on August 1 last year upheld the constitutionality of sub-classifying the SCs and STs to grant separate quotas for the most marginalised groups within these communities.

The government took into consideration the contents of the apex court's verdict, empirical data, social, economic, educational, employment and political status of the SC communities in the categorisation of SCs into three groups for implementation of the rule of reservation.

Caste classification

Accordingly, 15 sub-castes categorised as most backward were classified as Group-I with 1% reservation. Though these groups constituted 0.5% of the population, the government decided to provide them 1% reservation to ensure educational and employment opportunities for the most backward among the Scheduled Castes.

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Rain woes

People driving through a flooded road at Sumanahalli. Rains lashed many parts of Bengaluru on Monday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Loans now cheaper as major banks cut rates

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Major banks have cut their lending and deposit rates following the Reserve Bank of India's 50-basis point reduction in repo rate in 2025.

The State Bank of India (SBI) cut the repo rate-linked lending rates by 25 basis points to 8.25% and external benchmark lending rates to 8.65%. The revised rates come into effect from April 15. The Bank of Maharashtra also reduced its external benchmark rates to 8.65%. A basis point is one-hundredth of a percentage.

The Mumbai-based Bank of India reduced its home loan interest rates by 25 basis points to 7.9%.

The banks have also reduced deposit rates. The largest private sector bank HDFC Bank cut its deposit interest rates by 25 basis points. It announced that savings deposit for accounts with a balance lower than ₹50 lakh will accrue 2.75% and above ₹50 lakh will accrue 3.25%, effective April 12. The interest rates are changing for the first time in about three years, when the corresponding rates were 3% and 3.5%, respectively.

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BBMP achieves highest-ever property tax collection in 2024-25

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) collected ₹4,930 crore in property tax in the financial year 2024-25, making it the highest ever collected by the civic body. This marks a significant increase of around ₹1,000 crore compared to 2023-24 [₹3,918 crore].

While BBMP's total target for this year was ₹5,210.47 crore, it achieved 94.62% collection.

Yelahanka zone achieved a 104.36% tax collection amounting to ₹464.66 crore, followed by Mahadevapura zone which achieved a 100.12% collection with ₹1,310.58 crore, which is also the highest amount collected among all the zones. With ₹733.65 crore, South zone achieved 95.34% collection, East zone achieved 93.52% with ₹843.14 crore and Dasarahalli zone collected ₹152.94 crore achieving 92.72% collection.

Property tax collection in 2024 – 25

Zone	Target	Collection	Achievement (%)
Bommanahalli	₹585.11 cr.	₹490.03 cr.	83.75
Dasarahalli	₹164.95 cr.	₹152.94 cr.	92.72
East	₹891.89 cr.	₹834.14 cr.	93.52
Mahadevapura	₹1,309.04 cr.	₹1,310.58 cr.	100.12
Rajarajeshwari Nagar	₹434.35 cr.	₹381.75 cr.	87.89
South	₹769.50 cr.	₹733.65 cr.	95.34
West	₹610.39 cr.	₹562.61 cr.	92.17
Yelahanka	₹445.24 cr.	₹464.66 cr.	104.36

Source: BBMP

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Stocks surge but Trump doubles down on China

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

Stock markets on Monday welcomed U.S. tariff exemptions for electronics, but President Donald Trump signalled the reprieve would be temporary and warned no country would get "off the hook" in his trade war – especially China.

The world's two largest economies have been locked in a fast-moving game of brinkmanship since Mr. Trump launched a global tariff assault that particularly targeted Chinese imports.

Tit-for-tat exchanges have seen U.S. levies imposed on China rise to 145% and Beijing setting a retaliatory 125% band on U.S. imports.

The U.S. side had appeared to dial down the pressure slightly on Friday, listing tariff exemptions for smartphones, laptops, semiconductors and other electronic products for which China is a major source.

But Mr. Trump and some of his top aides said on Sunday that the exemptions had been misconstrued and would only be temporary as his team pursued fresh tariffs against many items on the list.

"NOBODY is getting 'off the hook'... especially not China which, by far, treats us the worst!" he posted on his Truth Social platform.

Donald Trump

The Chinese Commerce Ministry said Friday's move was only "a small step" and all tariffs should be cancelled.

China has sought to present itself as a stable alternative to an erratic Washington, courting countries spooked by the global economic storm.

Mr. Trump's trade war has raised fears about an economic downturn as the dollar has tumbled and investors have dumped U.S. government bonds, normally considered a safe haven investment.

But Asian and European stock markets rose firmly on Monday, after days of extreme volatility over several tariff twists and turns since Mr. Trump presented his "Liberation Day" levies on April 2.

The Paris and Frankfurt stock exchanges were up around 2% after midday, and London gained 1.7%, while Tokyo finished 1.2% higher and Hong Kong rose 2.4%.

Washington's new exemptions will benefit U.S. tech companies such as Nvidia and Dell as well as Apple, which makes iPhones and other premium products in China.

But the relief could be short-lived with some of the exempted consumer electronics targeted for upcoming sector-specific tariffs on goods deemed key to U.S. national defense networks.

Mr. Trump has imposed a universal tariff of 10% but paused higher duties for dozens of trading partners for 90 days, while maintaining pressure on China. On Sunday, Mr. Trump said tariffs on semiconductors - which powers any major technology from e-vehicles and iPhones to missile systems - "will be in place in the not distant future."

Titans — a well-oiled machine on a mission to reclaim glory

A strong top-order, coupled with menacing pacers, has made the Gujarat franchise a title contender this season; the team's Tamil core, led by Sai Sudharsan and Sai Kishore, has given it the balance and firepower needed to deal with everything opponents have thrown at it; consistent performances, even in defeat, has seen it perched at the top

VIJAY SONEJI

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Gujarat Titans announced its arrival in style, winning the Indian Premier League title in the first season of its existence. Compare that to the likes of Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals, who haven't been able to kiss the trophy yet despite playing in every edition since the tournament's formation in 2008.

When GT emerged as the champion in 2022, it emulated Rajasthan Royals' by lifting the title in its first attempt. Interestingly, it was the Royals that the Titans defeated in the final to emerge victorious.

The following year saw Ashish Nehra's boys nearly win the IPL for the second year in a row, suffering a heartbreaking last-ball loss, via DLS method, to Chennai Super Kings.

Last year, however, GT could not even qualify for the playoffs.

This time around, it has emerged as one of the strongest sides in the competition, despite its recent six-wicket defeat to Lucknow Super Giants bringing an end to its four match winning streak.

GT has a week to recover from the loss before facing Delhi Capitals, another team who saw a similar run end recently, a result that put the Titans on top of the table.

A glimpse

In the season-opener against Punjab Kings, the Titans lost by 11 runs while chasing an imposing 243 for five. Despite the defeat, that match gave a glimpse of the team's strengths: its top three batters had the potential to change the outcome of any game.

Shubman Gill, B. Sai Sudharsan and Jos Buttler have been fantastic this season and are one of the big reasons why GT looks so formidable.

Captain Gill has so far scored 208 runs at an average of 41.60 and a strike rate of 149.64, while Sai Sudharsan has made 329 (54.83, 151.61) and Buttler has struck 218 (43.60, 157.97). Sai Sudharsan has four fifties to his credit, while Gill and Buttler have two each.

Among the trio, Sai Sudharsan stands out with scores of 74, 63, 49, 5, 82 and 56. The left-hander's batting has not just been about the numbers either. It is also about how he achieved those numbers: scoring runs in style and with admirable composure. He drives, cuts, lofts and pulls with authority. His strokes are mostly orthodox, but he is also at home taking the unorthodox route, like the ramp shot, which he played off Fazalhaq Farooqi for a stunning six against Rajasthan Royals.

Sai Sudharsan has the potential to be an all-format player for India. After that match-winning knock, Royals' spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule predicted bright future for him.

"He has been a prolific scorer in domestic and I am sure he will get his opportunity. I have done a few tours of India A team with him and he scored runs in India and abroad. I am sure the selectors will be looking at him and his progress. After the IPL, he will be due for his opportunities," he said.

Sai Sudharsan's opening partner Gill already has 14 international hundreds, across formats, to his credit since making his debut for India six years ago.

Ingenious Englishman

Buttler, GT's number three, has been around in international cricket much longer. He is, in fact, one of the masters of modern white-ball cricket and is often rated as England's best batter of all time against the white ball. The 34-year-old has undoubtedly been one of the finest players in the league and the records back that up.

After playing his first two seasons for Mumbai Indians, the soft-spoken Englishman moved to the Royals in 2018. For the next seven years, until he was surprisingly let go by the management, he was the backbone of the team's batting, smashing seven hundreds and racking up more than 3,000 runs.

RR's loss, though, has been GT's gain.

Assistant coach Parthiv Patel explained why GT was keen to rope in Butter's, paying ₹15.75 crore for his services. "When we acquired him at the auction, that was the plan: that he would bat at number three. He is a senior cricketer on the ground, and he was also supposed to keep wickets, though he wasn't keeping wickets for England. But he was going to do that for us. He is one of the best players of white-ball cricket in recent years, and it is good to see him scoring runs and delivering for us," the former India wicketkeeper said.

Buttler has so far delivered for GT, with scores of 54, 39, 73 (not out) and 36.

Like Buttler, Sherfane Rutherford has proved another sensible overseas signing, that too for a 'paltry' ₹2.6 crore. The West Indian has lent firepower to the middle order, striking at 166.31 and averaging 39.50.

The presence of M. Shahrukh Khan and Rahul Tewatia ensures the middle order has enough heft. Then there is Washington Sundar, the talented, hard-working off-spinning all-rounder who is dependable when called upon, as he showed with a 29-ball 49 in the successful chase against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

If he makes it to the XI, there is a distinct Tamil flavour to the GT batting, alongside Sai Sudharsan and Shahrukh. The Titans' star performer this season is M. Sai Kishore, another Tamil Nadu player.

The curly-haired spinner, who took three for 30 in GT's first match against Punjab Kings, has been remarkably consistent. With 10 wickets so far, he remains a strong contender for the purple cap.

Parthiv is glad with the way the 28-year-old has performed. "Sai Kishore is probably the best spinner so far in this tournament. It is remarkable the way he is bowling and how brave he is in difficult conditions."

That is high praise indeed, especially when you consider that GT's spin bowling boasts the wily Rashid Khan. The Afghan leg-spinner, while not as impactful as he would have wanted to, remains a world-class cricketer who could strike form any moment.

"Rashid is a proven cricketer. He has done so well for so many years. It just takes one game. We are confident about Rashid's ability," said Parthiv.

Pace battery on fire

The management has every reason to feel confident in its Indian pacers Mohammed Siraj and Prasidh Krishna, who have played crucial roles in the team's success in the early part of the season.

Fresher, fierier and even faster on his return after a break, Siraj was the Player of the Match in successive games, first against former side Royal Challengers Bengaluru and then against his 'local' team SRH.

After conceding 41 runs without picking up a wicket in his first game, Prasidh has since not only been economical but also penetrative.

Prasidh and Siraj's superb efforts have ensured GT is coping with the absence of Kagiso Rabada, who had to go home to South Africa for personal reasons. Sai Kishore, Prasidh and Siraj have all claimed 10 wickets each.

With a team oozing class and consistency, the Titans have been living up to their name this season. And it will take a brave man to bet against them as we head into the business end of this IPL campaign.

THE GIST

- Having not qualified for the playoffs last season, the Titans are on a mission to erase those memories and mount a serious title challenge
- The trio of Gill, Sai Sudharsan and Buttler have ensured the team has made strong starts and racked up good numbers
- Rutherford has proven to be an astute pick, with the West Indian adding firepower to the middle-order
- A quartet of Tamilians has not only given Titans a distinct look but also a multitude of good options to pick from

Trump administration's changes worry Indian students in U.S.

While it is unlikely for students who are already pursuing courses to be affected, many new PhD applications are being rejected, say counsellors and foreign education consultants

Jahnavi T. R.
BENGALURU

Mohammad Azaan, a student from Bengaluru who is now in the U.S., says, "I pursued my MS degree in the United States of America (USA) and then applied for a PhD in three universities there. My application got through two universities and I had even chosen to go to one in the coming academic year. However, the new administration has cut down funding for research, which means that my PhD will no longer be funded by the university. So, I had to give up on my dream of pursuing a PhD in the U.S. It was a difficult decision, but I had no choice."

Indian students studying in the U.S., one of the most preferred destinations for Karnataka's STEM students for higher studies, are anxious about their future as the Donald Trump administration has announced a slew of amendments to the existing educational and economical policies.

Sarala Narayan, a parent from Mysuru, said that while her daughter is already pursuing a PhD in the U.S., she is worried about how the new regulations will affect her studies.

Education counsellors and foreign education consultants, however, say that while it is unlikely for students who are already pursuing courses to be affected, many new PhD applications are being rejected.

Donald Trump

"It is not likely that schools will suddenly tell their students to pay for their courses. But many students who are now applying for PhD courses are facing rejections," said Kunal Shah, Founder, Stencil Consulting.

Looming uncertainty

Besides PhD courses, parents of students who are expected to go to the U.S. this year are worried about the looming uncertainty.

"The times are such that there is a new announcement by Mr. Trump every day. When they ask us questions about these changes, we have no clarity. But I am positive that most of these are knee-jerk decisions, and they are not likely to pan out in the long run. This is what I've been assuring parents too," Mr. Shah explained.

Although it will take some time for consultancies to get comparative figures as the next intake is due in September, they say that they are seeing a slight dip in students wanting to go to the U.S. for higher studies. In fact, some of them have noticed that even those who have got admissions, especially to PhD courses, are cancelling their admissions.

Job prospects

"The new tariff regulations are expected to affect the job market in the U.S. Anyone going for further studies would naturally want to work there. However, parents are worried about whether their children can get jobs there. The window of three months between completing their studies and finding a job is also being strictly enforced now," said Subramanya M.N., consultant, SI-UK, Bengaluru.

He added, "We will definitely see a dip this year when compared to the previous few years. There are almost no students going to Canada any more because of geopolitical tensions and now the numbers for U.S. will also reduce."

KEA announces dress code for students appearing for CET

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA) has mandated a dress code for candidates writing the Common Entrance Test (CET) between April 15 and 17.

The dress code is as follows: men/women – half-sleeve attire, preferably collarless. For men, it is "simple pants with minimal/no pockets. Kurta-pyjamas, jeans, and shoes are prohibited. All electronic devices, including mobile phones and earphones, will not be allowed inside the exam hall," said a release. KEA officials also instructed candidates to show up at the centres one-and-a-half hours before the start of the examination.

"Police and Home Guards will conduct thorough checks before allowing candidates into exam halls. Candidates must arrive at least one-and-a-half hours early for security screening. Facial recognition and QR code verification will ensure candidate authenticity," said H. Prasanna, Executive Director, KEA.

He also said that "to curb malpractice, the exam will be monitored via CCTV surveillance, similar to recruitment tests.

Webcasting will track all 775 exam centres in real-time. District-level authorities, including deputy commissioners and chief executive officers of zilla panchayats, will oversee the process."

Mr. Prasanna urged students not to skip CET even if they scored low or have failed the PU exam in their first attempt, as CET offers a chance to improve rankings.

Advanced truck management system now operational at KIA

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A state of the art Airport Truck Management Facility (ATMF) has become operational at Kempegowda International Airport's (KIA) Domestic Cargo Terminal (DCT).

The ATMF, developed by Shell Mobility, is expected to ensure seamless cargo movement, reducing congestion and enhancing efficiency at the terminal.

The Airport Truck Management Facility at KIA has enabled automated, common pre-check-ins, paperless entry and digitalised pick-ups and exit processes to accelerate truck clearance. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"The ATMF ensures smooth operations by streamlining truck flow, enabling real-time processing, and providing driver amenities that enhance turnaround times and operational efficiency," Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) said.

It added that by handling approximately 1,600 trucks daily, BLR Cargo has effectively addressed key inefficiencies such as congestion, delays, and limited driver facilities. "With over 250 parking bays, the ATMF optimises operations through digital processing, automated approvals, and seamless cargo movement," it added.

BIAL said that by leveraging advanced digital solutions, the ATMF has transformed truck movement at the airport.

It added that this facility has enabled automated, common pre-check-ins, paperless entry and digitalised pick-ups and exit processes to accelerate truck clearance.

Introduced handheld devices for check-ins have slashed truck turnaround time from four hours to one, with 78% of trucks waiting less than 20 minutes before entering cargo terminals. BIAL said that 24/7 CCTV monitoring enhances security and operational oversight and app-based approval mechanisms enable faster, digitised truck clearances, optimising logistics efficiency.

"Given the significant increase in cargo here at the airport, it was time to invest in solutions that ensure seamless and timely movement of trucks, as well as the well-being of truck drivers by providing essential amenities. That's where BLR Cargo together with Shell Mobility India conceived India's first on-airport truck management facility with a fully automated paperless truck entry and exit process at the Airport Truck Management Facility and cargo terminals," Satyaki Raghunath, Chief Operating Officer, BIAL, said.

Chaos at Majestic over fewer metro services

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Namma Metro's Nadaprabhu Kempegowda (Majestic) station witnessed chaotic scenes on Monday morning as commuters going to offices as well as those returning to the city after the weekend were met with overcrowded platforms and delayed metro trains.

The disruption was attributed to a lower-than-usual train frequency on account of the government holiday for Ambedkar Jayanti. Trains were reportedly arriving every 8-10 minutes during peak hours, a significant drop from the usual 3-5 minute intervals. With hundreds of daily commuters dependent on the metro to reach work on time, platforms at Majestic quickly turned into a sea of people with barely any space to stand or move.

"I am a daily metro commuter and I have certain timings that I follow to reach office on time. It has never changed, so I depended on the same today," said Sourav R., a commuter from Jalahalli. "However, the timings were different today. The Majestic waiting lines were really long and the next metro came 15 minutes later. I reached office late."

Many took to social media to express their frustration, blaming the BMRCL for failing to anticipate the rush. "BMRCL thinks everyone has a holiday, running trains at 10-minute frequencies at rush hour," said Krishna A.G. on X. "Majestic will have a stampede one of these days and only BMRCL will be to blame. No queue, no rules, it is a free-for-all today," he added.

Another commuter, Prabha Sekhar, complained of "massive crowding and confusion" with no communication from BMRCL authorities.

Even Bengaluru Central MP P.C. Mohan criticised the metro operator for poor planning. Sharing a video of the crowded station, he posted on X: "Unacceptable mismanagement at Majestic Metro Station this morning. Reducing train frequency to 10 mins during peak hours, assuming everyone has a holiday, created absolute chaos." He urged BMRCL to restore normal frequency and ensure better planning on public holidays.

Yashwanth Chavan, Chief PRO, BMRCL, said, "Following the crowd build up at Majestic station on account of the general holiday today, BMRCL has operationalised four additional trains from Baiyappanahalli to Majestic to enhance public convenience. Additionally, one train was short terminated at Majestic and returned to ITPL. With this, a total of seven fresh trips originating from Majestic, Garudacharpalya and Whitefield. Also, this evening, trains from ITPL will operate at 5 minutes headway."

BDS student found dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 21-year-old BDS student allegedly ended her life at Hebbal in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The deceased, Soumya, was residing with her parents and younger brother in an apartment on Sumangali Sevashrama Road. She was in the second year of her BDS course at a private college in Yeshwantpur.

On Sunday, she went to the terrace of the building and jumped to her death, the police said. Passers-by noticed Soumya falling and rushed her to a hospital where she was declared 'brought dead'.

The Hebbal police have taken up a case of unnatural death.

(Those in distress or with suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani Ph.: 104 or the Tele MANAS toll-free helpline numbers 14416 or 1-800-891-4416.)

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients SRI. RAMESH CHANDRA ROY, S/o. Sri. Baijnath Roy and his son Sri. SIDDHARTH ROY have entered into a sale agreement dated 12-11-2024 to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder for a valuable consideration with its owner Sri. T. S. NARAYANA REDDY, S/o. Late Subba Reddy rep. by his GPA holder and Developer M/s. Concorde I Value Homes India LLP (formerly Known as M/s. Concorde I value Homes India Private Limited) rep. by its Partners Sri. B. S. Shivaram and R. G. Sunil, having its registered office at 46/A, 1st Main Road, 3rd Phase, J. P. Nagar, Bangalore-78.

If any persons having any claims, right, title and interest whatsoever over the schedule property may forward their objections to the undersigned in writing with supporting documents of your such claims, within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice. Failing which it will be deemed that there are no claims, right, title and interest by anybody and my client will proceed for completion of sale transaction and thereafter no claims will be considered.

SCHEDULE

Residential Vacant Plot bearing No.80, Village Panchayathi Khata bearing property No. 303/ 80, PID No.150200301500323460, in the Layout known as CONCORDE OPUS-2 PHASE-3 approved by formed in converted old Sy. No. 90/B New Sy. No. 90/1 (vide conversion order bearing Application No. 404136, dated 12-10-2022 issued by Deputy Commissioner Bangalore District, measuring East to West 15 Mts and North to South 9 Mts in Total measuring 135 Sq. Mts situated at Tharalu Village, Uttarahalli Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk and bounded on : East By : 9 M Road,West By : Plot No. 65, North By : Plot No.81, South By: Plot No. 79.

MANJUNATHA & ASSOCIATES
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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, ANDREW Pavithran, R/a No.487/1, 21st Cross, Mary Nilyam, Chavara Church Lane, Egipura, Near Rama Temple, Bangalore-560047 have changed my minor daughter's name from Harshita Andrew Pavithran to Harshita A Pavithran vide affidavit dt: 11.04.2025 sworn before Notary Sivakumara.M.N, B'luru.

I, ARUN Gujaran, S/O: Gujaran Giriya Katapadi, R/O: 285, 3rd B Main Road, 8th Block, Koramangala, Bangalore 560095. Have Changed my Name as Arun Gujaran Katapady. Affidavit dated on 11/04/25

I, SHARON, W/o: Xavier Roshan Bose, R/O: G– 0643, Divya Shree Republic Of Whitfield Apartments, Epip Zone, Whitefield, Blore – 560037. Have Changed My Name As Sharon Bose. Vide Affidavit dated on 11/04/25.

I, Hitherto Known As Avinash Srinivasamurthy S/O K Srinivasa Murthy Residing At B2-904, Amrutha Heights Nallurahalli Main Road, Bangalore North Whitefield Bengaluru, Karnataka 560066, Have Changed My Name And Shall Hereafter Be Known As Aavinash Vanek For All Future Purposes

I, ANTHONI Jacob, S/o Jacob Lovely Ponnaiah, R/a No.B-706, 1st Floor, 3rd Cross, Bahubali Nagar, Jalahalli, Bengaluru-560013 have changed my name to Anthony Jacob vide affidavit dt: 14.04.2025 sworn before Notary Udaykumar.K, B'luru

LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE VII TH ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE : GUDUR
I.A. No. : 356/2023
A.S. No. : 36/2019

Boompalli Venkata Reddy
Petitioner / Apellant
Vs.
Gangireddy Padmamma and others ... Respondents
To,
Gangireddy Haritha wife of Siva Nagaraju Reddy Door No. 407, TC. Palya, D.S. Apartment, K.R. Puram, Bangalore City.

OBJECTION NOTICE

Where as the above application is filed by the Petitioner against you is posted for your notice on 24.04.2025. You are hereby directed to appear before the above court either in person of through your advocate and the your objections if any on 24.04.2025 at 10 am without fail. If youfail to appear on that date the matter will be decided in your absence on the material availabel on record. Please take notice accordingly.

Date of hearing : 24.04.2025
L.Ramachandraiah Rao,
Advocate, Kota, Tirupati District.

THE HINDU GROUP

SPORTSTAR
DAY 25
INDIAN POSTER LEAGUE

Play now & start winning!

1. Which team did India defeat by 102 runs in the final to win the historic Hero Cup (C.A.B. Jubilee Tournament) in 1993?
2. The only Test cricketer to have taken all ten wickets in an innings and also scored a Test hundred in his career is from which country?
3. Which cricketer, after having his jaw fractured by a Mervyn Dillon delivery in a 2002 Test match, famously returned to the field to take the wicket of Brian Lara?

*T&C apply

Scan QR code or visit **newsth.live/SSIPLPA** to take the quiz. Get all three answers right and unlock a legendary Sportstar poster. **Top 3 winners* every day win gift vouchers.**

Yesterday's poster: David Beckham

Yesterday's Winners:
1. Vinod Kumar Vij, Rohtak | 2. Dilip Viswaraj, Chennai | 3. Ajaya Kumar Jena, Bhubaneswar

BUSINESS CONNECT A Business Initiative

Book Launch "Sakala Narasimhulu Chetty – A Memoir" launched by Poojya Brahmanandaji, Head of Chinmaya Mission Karnataka

Recently the book "Sakala Narasimhulu Chetty - A Memoir" was launched by Poojya Brahmanandaji, Head of Chinmaya Mission Karnataka, in a special event held at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bengaluru. The evening featured spiritual reflections, tributes, and messages from distinguished guests including Sri A. Krishnamurthy, Former CMD, KIOCLsaid the book is a source of inspiration for the youth, and the important aspects of his life have been recorded in the form of a book, Sri R.P. Ravi Shankar, President, Arya Vysya Mahasabha, said that the contribution made by Narasimhulu to the development of the entire society is immense. Sakala Narasimhulu Chetty was not only known as an entrepreneur but also a successful person in his 97-year-old life. He set an example in matters of religion, faith, purity, poetry, and life. "Those who have lived their lives for the sake of art and charity are very rare. Those who are so rare are all Narasimha." said Poojya Brahmanandaji Chinmaya Mission Head.

Kauvery Hospitals, Bengaluru, has announced the launch of its ambitious initiative, "Kauvery Sankalp,"

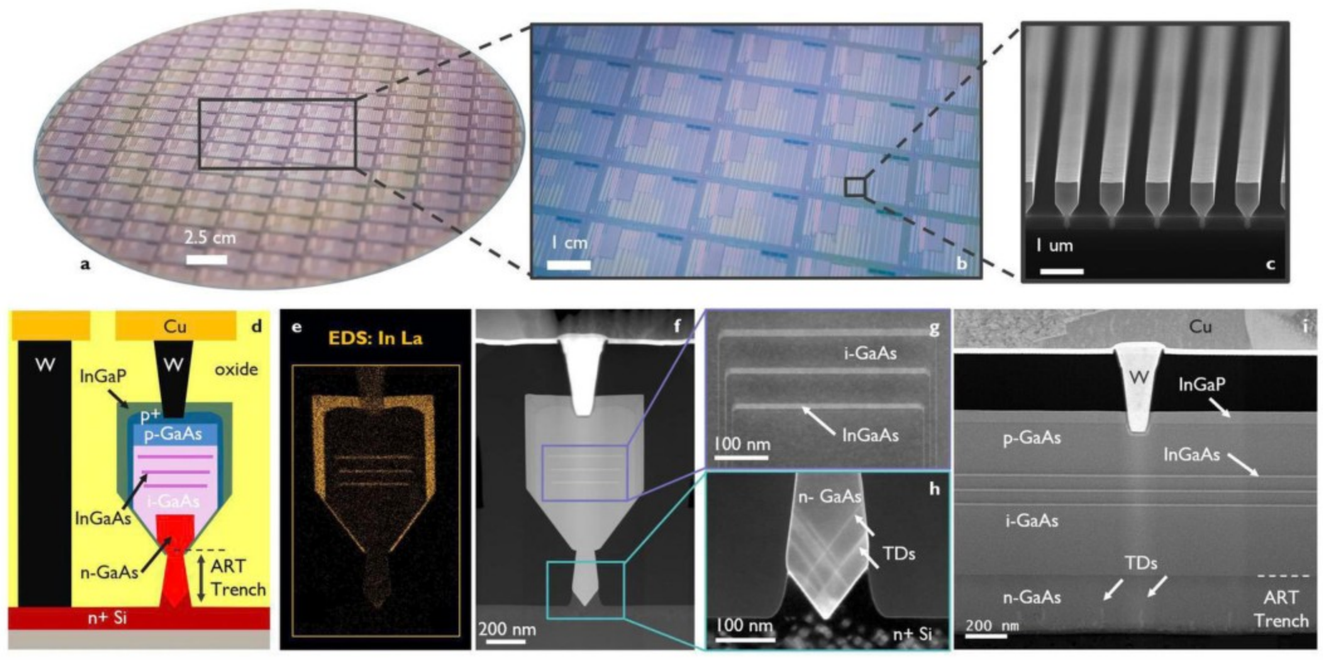
"Kauvery Sankalp," initiative by Kauvery Hospitals, Bengaluru aimed at providing free robotic knee replacement surgeries to 100 farmers across Karnataka. This initiative, known as the "Robotic Joint Assurance Program," is designed to offer financially eligible farmers free robotic knee replacement surgeries. Agriculture Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy officially inaugurated the program and said Programs like these not only address critical healthcare gaps but also empower our farming community by restoring their physical strength and dignity in the presence of Dr. S. Vijayabhaskaran, Executive Director of Kauvery Hospitals, Bengaluru region, and senior leaders from Kauvery Hospitals' Electronic City and Marathahalli branches. Dr. S. Vijayabhaskaran, shared his personal motivation behind Kauvery Sankalp. The program is inspired by my personal experiences and a deep desire to give back to the farming community by restoring their mobility and enabling them to return to active farming. This initiative goes beyond medical intervention–it reflects

Kauvery Hospitals' commitment to making world-class healthcare accessible to all. Under Kauvery Sankalp, only eligible farmers requiring knee replacement surgery will be provided treatment to restore their active mobility. Free medical screening camps will be conducted in Nagamangala, Hassan, Davangere, Mangaluru, Hubballi, and Kolar in April to identify eligible candidates. Kauvery Hospitals will continue providing various free medical services every year. Interested farmers can check their eligibility by contacting the Kauvery Sankalp helpline. They can also register for screening camps, which will commence immediately and continue until April 30, 2025.

Miniature laser grown onto silicon chip could revolutionise computing

Computing may be set for the next great breakout, with scientists growing lasers directly onto a standard silicon chip, making it easy to integrate with current manufacturing infrastructure; information will be carried by photons, which are particles of light, that will replace electrons

Tejasri Gururaj



Top, L-R: photograph of a fabricated 300-mm silicon wafer containing thousands of GaAs devices; close-up view of a fabricated 300 mm wafer showing multiple dies; and scanning electron micrograph of a GaAs nano-ridge array before encapsulation. The bottom row shows various components of chip. ARXIV:2309.04473V1

The invention of silicon chips revolutionised communications. Even today they are the cornerstone of the technologies we use to move information around the world.

The way they work has changed significantly, however. They have become better: for a long time this was because experts improved the hardware to operate as efficiently as possible. But more recently, researchers have started to replace the electrons with photons, the particles of light, as the agents responsible for storing and manipulating information.

Thus today we have silicon photonics with valuable applications in data centres and sensors as well as potential ones in quantum computing.

Silicon photonics is quickly gaining traction due to the many advantages it offers over traditional semiconductor chips.

In a study in *Nature*, scientists from the US and Europe reported that they had successfully fabricated the first miniaturised lasers directly on silicon wafers, marking a significant advance in silicon photonics.

Photons carry information faster, with greater data capacity and lower energy losses than electrons.

But photons aren't silver bullets. A significant challenge associated with using photons is integrating the source of these particles – a light source – with the silicon chip itself.

Currently, engineers' best bet is to attach a separate laser light source to the chip.

The resulting device operates more slowly than a chip with an integrated light source because of the small but significant mismatches that arise due to being manufactured independently. Separately manufacturing and attaching the lasers is also more expensive.

In the new study, the researchers surmounted this problem by "growing" the laser directly on a silicon chip, in a process that is also more scalable.

The research team also conducted its entire process in a standard complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor (CMOS) manufacturing line, which the technology industry currently uses to manufacture electronic chips.

Thus, the new technique could be compatible with existing manufacturing methods.

Getting on the chip

A typical silicon chip has four components: a source to produce the electrons or photons, waveguides, modulators, and photodetectors.

In a photonic chip, a laser is the light source. This is the hardest part to make on the silicon chip itself.

The waveguides act as paths for the photons, similar to how wires are paths for electrons.

Modulators are devices that encode information onto light (or decode information from a light signal).

They do this by transcribing the information in some physical property of the light, like varying its intensity, wavelength, or phase. (Similarly, they extract information by "reading" these variations in an incoming carrier signal.)

Finally, photodetectors convert light into electrical signals.

Switching the laser on

In its simplest form, a laser – an acronym of 'light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation' – works by amplifying light in a process called stimulated emission.

Here, an electron in a higher energy level is "kicked" by an incoming photon to lose some energy and drop to a lower energy level. This energy lost is in the form of another photon whose energy matches that of the incident photon. When this process occurs repeatedly, the population of electrons generates a coherent beam of light. This is a laser.

Silicon itself can't emit light efficiently as it has an indirect bandgap. In other words, in a silicon atom, an electron in a higher energy level cannot drop to a lower one on its own; instead, it requires an additional particle to help release the electron's energy and drop down.

Most lasers use semiconductor materials like gallium arsenide to produce the light. These materials have a direct band gap, meaning that electrons inside the material can drop from a higher energy level to a lower one by emitting a photon.

Direct band-gap materials allow electrons to directly emit photons without requiring them to be kicked, converting more electrical energy into light without additional interactions. Thus, the laser is more energy-efficient.

Integrating gallium arsenide with silicon is a major challenge because of the different arrangement of atoms in each of the elements. When gallium arsenide is grown layer by layer on silicon, the mismatch in the crystal structure of the materials causes imperfections where the atomic patterns don't line up properly.

The photonic silicon chip is novel because it's the first demonstration of a fully monolithic laser diode on a silicon wafer. The team's process is also scalable and cost-effective

Imagine trying to fit two puzzle pieces together when they are not part of the same puzzle.

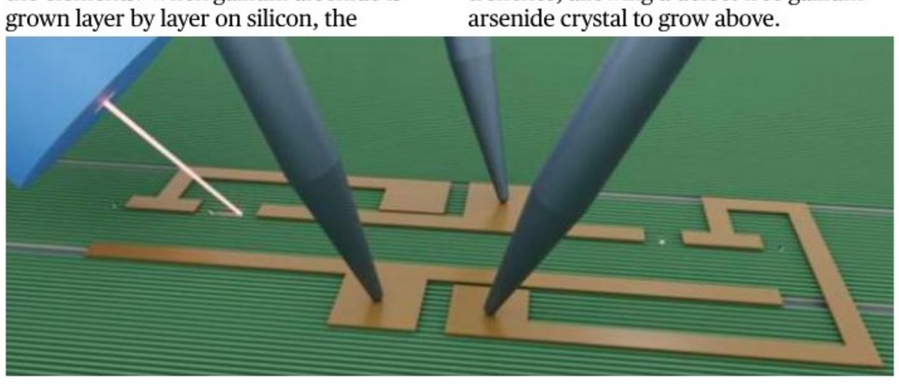
When electrons encounter these defects, they lose energy as heat rather than as light, rendering the laser less efficient.

In the trenches

In their study, the researchers successfully created a chip that consisted of a silicon wafer base, nanometre-sized ridges through which photons travelled, and a small region that produced these photons.

The idea of the ridges came from a 2007 study, in which researchers from AmberWave Systems Corp. found that if gallium arsenide is deposited on silicon at the bottom of a narrow, deep trench surrounded by an insulating material, the defects become 'trapped,' meaning they don't interfere with the laser's ultimate operation.

So the researchers carved nanometre-wide ridges in a 300-mm-long silicon wafer and applied silicon dioxide as the insulating material. Any defects were confined to the bottom of these trenches, allowing a defect-free gallium arsenide crystal to grow above.



A 3D drawing of a wafer-scale test configuration depicting light radiated upwards by the left facet and collected by a multimode fibre and three electrical probes driving the nano-ridge laser and monitoring the ridge photodiode. ARXIV:2309.04473V1

Next, on the same wafer, the researchers deposited three few-atoms-thick layers of indium gallium arsenide (i.e., gallium arsenide where 20% of gallium atoms had been replaced with indium to achieve optimal light emission). These layers together functioned as the laser.

Finally, the team deposited a layer of indium gallium phosphide on top of the whole setup for protection.

To make the laser work, the researchers added electrical contacts connected to an external current source. When a current flowed into the indium gallium arsenide region, the latter emitted photons that flowed through the waveguides.

Solving a long-standing problem

The researchers were able to embed 300 functional lasers on a single 300-mm silicon wafer.The size of the wafer is important because it's the industry standard in modern semiconductor manufacturing and can thus be integrated without demanding significant changes.

The laser produced light with a wavelength of 1,020 nm, which is well-suited for short-ranged transmissions between computer chips.

Thus, the researchers expect their chip could lead to a substantial improvement in computing performance and reduce energy consumption in data centres.

The threshold current required to run the laser was as little as 5 mA, comparable to that required for an LED in a computer mouse. The laser's output was around 1MW.

The laser could continuously operate for 500 hours at room temperature (25° C). At around 55°C, its efficiency dropped.

While this duration is promising, recent research on optical silicon chips has demonstrated continuous operation at temperatures up to 120°C, highlighting ongoing challenges in developing stable semiconductor lasers.

In sum, the photonic silicon chip is novel because it's the first demonstration of a fully monolithic laser diode on a silicon wafer of this size. The team's process is also scalable and cost-effective.

(Tejasri Gururaj is a freelance science writer and journalist with a master's degree in physics. tejasrigururaj@gmail.com)

Women transplant paddy at Pathukannu near Puducherry, on April 09, 2020. KUMAR S.S.

'Land-holding farmers doing non-farming activities helps efficiency'

R. Sujatha

Land-holding farmers who engage in non-farming activity tend to improve labour efficiency on their farms, a recent study has found.

The study aimed to understand the impact of multiple job holding on farm labour use efficiency. The researchers used data from the International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) of farmers from States such as Odisha, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Karnataka, and Madhya Pradesh for the period between 2010 and 2014.

"This is important as participation in non-farm activities alters farmers' labour allocation decisions between farm and non-farm activities," the researchers said in their paper.

The data came from the Village Dynamics in South Asia Project. The researchers adopted data envelopment analysis to estimate labour use efficiency. This is a mathematical technique that compares the efficiency of multiple workers doing the same kind of task without having to get into exactly how they do it.

Anviksha Drall, assistant professor of economics at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru; and Sabuj Kumar Mandal, associate professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT-Madras, conducted the study.

Their article, 'Does multiple job holding raise labour use efficiency of farm operators? Evidence from rural India?' was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Applied Economics*.

When farmers migrated, either within their State or outside, they gained new knowledge about farming practices that they applied to their own farms when they returned

The researchers found that when farmers migrated, either within their State or outside, they gained new knowledge about farm practices that they applied to their farms when they returned. Often, farmers had time on their hands after sowing seeds. In the intervening months, their family carried on the agricultural work. Large farmers with financial wherewithal hired labour to work in their absence, Mr. Mandal said.

Ms. Drall said, "The study recommends promoting structured non-farm employment opportunities in rural areas to maximise positive spillover effects on farming."

Mr. Mandal added: "Farming is becoming riskier because of climatic shock and price fluctuation. Farmers are diversifying into non-farm activities, either by starting a family occupation such as carpentry, craftsmanship, or a salon, or they migrate. When they migrate, they learn how those in other states conduct their farming activities and the use of technology."

The migration and multiple job holding help in two ways: to invest in new farming practices and improve labour efficiency. "We argue that instead of concentrating only on farming, you can diversify into non-farming activities," Mr. Mandal explained.

"But to start a business, you need money. Farmers face credit constraints. Therefore, we suggest that governments should come in and help farmers to diversify into non-farming activity," he added.

The researchers said they deliberately selected data from villages in semi-arid and humid tropics in the country. Households were chosen randomly based on village listing in each selected village.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

The world's oldest lifeforms

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

Scientists widely believe X are the first lifeforms on the earth that produced oxygen, and thus filled the atmosphere with this gas during the Great Oxidation Event around 2.4-2 billion years ago. Name X.

QUESTION 2

This particular form of rock is created when X (from Q1) forms large colonies where each member is connected to the next in thin tendrils. X secretes some compounds that gum up the sand, soil, and other minerals and over time these layers, or 'mats,' form the rock. There are 3.5-billion-year-old rocks of this type in Australia, among other places. Name it.

QUESTION 3

_____ resemble bacteria but are much more. They are a type of prokaryote and eukaryotes evolved from them. Perhaps most notably, they get their energy from a wider range of sources than other lifeforms, including natural hydrogen gas and even metals. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 4

The Ginkgo biloba tree is considered a famous example of a _____ _____, a term that means the species has maintained its current form for an unusually long period of time. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 5

The _____ fungus, a.k.a. the "humongous fungus," is the world's most massive living organism, weighing up to 35,000 tonnes, and is currently growing in Oregon, USA. It may also be 8,000 years old. Fill in the blank.

Answers to April 10 quiz:

1. Term for the presence of young stars near Milky Way's centre – **Ans: Paradox of youth**
2. Physicist who popularised the sprinkler paradox – **Ans: Richard Feynman**
3. Compound that corrodes steel only when diluted – **Ans: Nitric acid**
4. Paradox about resources required for sensory processing – **Ans: Moravec's paradox**
5. Period of wakefulness in a sleep-deprived person – **Ans: Second wind**

Visual: **Water strider**

First contact: K.N. Viswanathan | Tamal Biswas | Dinesh Kumar | Joe V.R. | Sheney Muraly

Visual: Name this micro-animal. It's renowned for being able to survive harsh conditions, including outer space, and evolved around 500 million years ago. CREDIT: KIOSYA Y., VONČINA K., GĄSIOREK P. (2021)

For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Diesel price hike: Truckers begin strike

Barring milk delivery vehicles, all other goods carriers will remain off the road in support of the call

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Truck operators across Karnataka launched an indefinite strike from midnight on Monday, demanding a rollback of the recent diesel price hike and a reduction in toll charges. The protest, led by the Federation of Karnataka State Lorry Owners and Agents' Association (FKSLOA), is expected to bring the movement of goods across the State to a near standstill.

Lorries parked near the Kanteerava stadium in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

FKSLOA president G.R. Shanmugappa stated that around six lakh trucks have joined the protest. "We are firm on our stand. The strike will continue until the government reverses the diesel price increase," he said.

Barring milk delivery vehicles, all other goods carriers – including those transporting fuel, LPG, construction material, and essentials – will remain off the road. Over 60 transport associations from 24 states have pledged their support to the protests and trucks from these states will not enter Karnataka during the agitation.

The strike comes in response to the State government's decision to raise diesel sales tax from 18.44% to 21.17%, starting April 1. This hike has caused diesel prices to rise by ₹2.05 per litre, escalating operational costs for transporters. "Truckers are already burdened with high expenses. This hike is unacceptable," Mr. Shanmugappa said.

Among the truckers' key demands are the complete removal of toll collection within the State, dismantling of RTO check posts at State borders, and withdrawal of the Centre's guideline mandating a ₹15,000 fee for renewing a vehicle's fitness certificate.

Meanwhile, regular cab services in the city will be unaffected. Ola and Uber Drivers' Association president Tanveer Pasha said taxi drivers would extend only moral support to the strike. "Cab operations will continue as usual on Tuesday," he confirmed.

Martyrs' Memorial near Mysore Bank Circle encroached upon

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

The Martyrs' Memorial near Mysore Bank Circle has been overshadowed with the area around it allegedly being encroached upon by the Shanaishchara Temple Trust, that is constructing a statue in the space.Social activists have expressed outrage over the failure of the government and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike to protect the memorial of those who sacrificed their lives for the country.

The statue, about 21 feet high, is being built by temple trust allegedly without permission from the authorities, including the BBMP.

The memorial was built on August 15, 1972, under the supervision of the Government of India, the State government, and the erstwhile Bengaluru Municipal Corporation (now BBMP) as part of the silver jubilee of India's Independence. Owing to the ongoing construction of the statue, the monument is no longer visible to the public.

'Martyrs' stone near Mysore Bank Circle on Kempe Gowda Road; (right) the construction of a statue under way. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Naija Horatagarara Vedike, a forum of social activists, wrote to the Chief Minister, Deputy CM, Chief Secretary, and BBMP Commissioner on April 11, demanding protection for the memorial, stopping of the unauthorised construction, and renaming Mysore Bank Circle as Swatantrya Veerara Chowk or Hutatma Chowk. In the letter, the forum stated that students of Central College sacrificed their lives during the freedom struggle, and alleged that the memorial of these martyred students is disappearing owing to some vested interests. "This is the place where these students laid their hearts on the British gun and died heroic deaths. The memorial should be freed from the people who have illegally occupied it, rebuilt, and made available for public viewing. If not, our struggle will become a movement," an activist said.

History

Shamanna, Gundappa, Prahlad Shetty and G.V. Thirumalayya, students of the then Central College, who participated in the Quit India Movement called by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942, were killed by the British. A 'Martyrs' Memorial' was built at Mysore Bank Circle under the supervision of the Government of India in 1972 in memory of these martyred students, and to commemorate their sacrifice for the future generations. Later, a Shanaischara temple was built on this site.

Senior BBMP officials clarified to *The Hindu* that the statue being built is unauthorised, and no permission was given for its construction.

However, Somashekar, secretary of the temple trust, said, "Construction of the statue is going on with the help of devotees. No disturbance will be caused to the memorial of the freedom fighters."

Asked about the lack of permission from the BBMP, he added, "This is God's work. All temples and mosques are built in this way."

Government negligence

Social activists have accused the government and BBMP of neglecting the memorial. "In the past, veteran freedom fighter late H.S. Doreswamy had fought for preservation of the memorial. However, the BBMP and the government failed to protect it," said H.M. Vekatesh, member of Naija Horatagarara Vedike. "Previously, under pressure from activists, the BBMP conducted a joint survey of temples, including the memorial site, and prepared a report. However, it is hesitating to submit the report. We have filed an appeal with the Information Commissioner against the BBMP," he added.

Hutatmara Smaraka Samrakshana Trust president M.S. Saravanan said, "The temple management should stop work on construction of the statue that is encroaching on the memorial. Steps should be taken to protect the memorial. A petition has been submitted to the government."

Veteran comedy star Bank Janardhan no more

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bank Janardhan

Bank Janardhan, veteran Kannada comedy actor, passed away at a private hospital in Bengaluru on Monday of age-related issues. He was 75.

Bank Janardhan, who did significant work in television, featured in popular serials like *Papa Pandu, Mangalya, Jokali,* and *Robo Family*. In films, he debuted with *Pitamaha,* the K.L. Swamy-directed film in 1985. Known for his unique dialogue delivery and comic timing, his memorable performances were seen in Upendra's *Shhh!* (1993) and *Tarle Nan Maga* (1992), the Anant Nag-starrer comedy drama *Ganesha Subramanya* (1992) and *Kaurava* (1998), headlined by B.C. Patil and Prema.

Born in 1948, Bank Janardhan trained in theatre before entering TV and films. In a long career in cinema, he featured in more than 500 movies. The actor had suffered a heart attack in 2023. The mortal remains of Bank Janardhan were kept at his residence in Sulthanpalya for public homage before the funeral.

College fest

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Students' talents were on display at Carnivalesque-25, a National Inter-College Sports and Cultural Championship, held at St. Francis College, Koramangala recently. Students from across the country came together for the two-day event.

U.T. Khader, Speaker, and actor Vasishtha N. Simha inaugurated it. Mr. Khader encouraged students to harness their talents, creativity, and knowledge to carve paths to success.

With 1,325 students from 97 colleges participating, Carnivalesque-25 was a melting pot of cultures, ideas, and competition.

St. Joseph's University, Bengaluru, won the Championship Trophy.

Timings
BENGALURU

TUESDAY, APR. 15	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:32
RISE 20:29	SET 07:21
WEDNESDAY, APR. 16	
RISE 06:07	SET 18:32
RISE 21:22	SET 08:04
THURSDAY, APR. 17	
RISE 06:06	SET 18:32
RISE 22:15	SET 08:50

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	25
Mysuru	34	20
Bengaluru	34	21

Bengaluru Today
34°C Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C The weather will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Chances of light to moderate rain and thundershower with gusty winds.

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THE HINDU
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From Page One

BBMP achieves highest-ever property tax collection in 2024-25

The West zone stood sixth with a collection of ₹562.61 crore (92.17%), Rajarajeshwari Nagar collected ₹381.75 crore (87.89%) while Bommanahalli achieved the least percentage 83.75% collection with ₹490.03 crore.

The BBMP credited this achievement to a number of measures that were taken up, including the One Time Settlement (OTS) scheme which was introduced in February 2024. The scheme waived the compounding interest on arrears and reduced penalties by 50% providing a significant relief to defaulters.

Systematic work and IT-based follow up on arrears and current tax dues, issuing of SoPs and rules for recovering arrears and door-to-door follow up for arrears and current tax were the other reasons provided by Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), BBMP.

He further said, "All this happened without increasing property tax rates which continue to be the same as they were in the year 2016. This financial year (2025-26), we will cross ₹6,000 crore.

After the expiry of OTS scheme in November 2024, BBMP's decision to auction the properties of long-term defaulters prompted most of them to clear their dues, officials said.

INSPIR'Ed Awards 2025 presented

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Presidency Group of Institutions (PGI) hosted INSPIR'Ed Awards 2025 on Saturday on the Presidency University campus.

The event honoured teaching and non-teaching staff for their contributions to education and service within the Presidency Institutions.

Author Anita Nair and former IPS officer and cybersecurity expert Sanjay Sahay were chief guests. They emphasised the significant role educators play in national development.

Nafeesa Ahmed, Director, PGI, spoke about the role of teachers in guiding students and strengthening communities. Kauser Nissar Ahmed, Founder Trustee, expressed appreciation for everyone involved in the growth of the Presidency Schools.

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ISSN 0971 - 751X

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The increase in China's exports in the month of March

12.4 In per cent. China's exports jumped 12.4% in March from a year earlier in a last-minute flurry of activity as companies rushed to beat increases in U.S. tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump. Analysts forecast sharp setbacks ahead. AP

The death toll from U.S. strikes in the west of Sanaa

7 Yemen's Houthi rebels said on Monday that the number of people killed from U.S. strikes carried out overnight on Sunday, on the west of the capital Sanaa, had risen to seven. The strikes targeting a factory in the al-Sawari industrial zone in the Bani Matar region also injured 29 others. AFP

Japan's population as of October 2024, according to data

120.3 In million. Japan's population fell to 120.3 million as of October 2024, official data showed on Monday, marking a record fall of 8,98,000 people from the previous year. Japan's birth rate is among the lowest in the world. AFP

The GDP growth forecast of Singapore for 2025

0-2 In per cent. Singapore has downgraded its GDP growth forecast for 2025 to 0-2%, the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) said, citing the impact of U.S. President Donald Trump's tariffs on global trade. The Monetary Authority of Singapore has also loosened monetary policy. PTI

Remittances received by Pakistan in the month of March

4.1 In $ billion. Pakistan received a record $4.1 billion in remittances in March, the highest monthly inflow, the State Bank of Pakistan said. The data showed that in the first nine months of FY25 (July-March), remittances reached $28.07 billion. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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How is spaceflight safety ensured?

The Indian Space Research Organisation is currently placing tried and tested protocols in place as it prepares for its maiden human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan. While Gaganyaan isn't expected to dock with any space station, its crew will be familiarised with the established procedures for docking

FULL CONTEXT

T.V.Venkateswaran

The recent safe return of NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Barry Wilmore after a nine-month stay onboard the International Space Station (ISS) underscored the importance of following safety protocols. While these protocols were hidden from view, they allowed NASA to make sure that the astronauts were not harmed physically or mentally in the course of their unpredictable Starliner test mission. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is currently putting similar protocols in place as it prepares for its maiden human spaceflight mission, Gaganyaan. In this endeavour, its scientists and engineers are drawing from both the latest in research and incidents and accidents of the past.

Human spaceflight has three key phases: launch, orbit, and reentry. Let's explore safety protocols in each phase.

Before and during launch

On the launchpad: In 1967, three members of NASA's Apollo-1 crew met with tragedy when the crew capsule they were testing on a launchpad in Florida – even before the rocket took off – caught fire, killing all of them. Should a similar incident recur today, the crew will need to flee the area quickly. Thus, ISRO has installed ziplines and a fireproof bubble lift at its second launch pad at SHAR in Sriharikota.

After ignition until orbital insertion: A human-rated launch vehicle includes an emergency exit device, like the back door of a bus, to be activated in case a life-threatening incident occurs after the rocket has lifted off. In contrast to the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), ISRO's medium-lift launch vehicle that lifts satellites, the human-rated version will feature a tower-like structure on top.

The crew module is fastened to this tower-like structure. In case of a launch vehicle malfunction, the crew module and its escape mechanism will first disengage from the main rocket, then, the escape tower's solid fuel engines – designed to ignite quickly – will produce a tremendous amount of thrust in a short period of time, propelling the space capsule upwards and away from the rocket.

This is the Crew Escape System. On the human-rated LVM3, it is tractor-type, meaning a powerful engine will pull the crew module away from harm. The SpaceX Crew Dragon capsule utilises a pusher-type system where the system is located beneath the crew module and pushes it away from the main rocket.

During launch: The crew escape mechanism operates in three modes depending on the altitude obtained during the emergency. ISRO's Crew Escape System has two types of motors: the Low-altitude Escape Motor (LEM), which can generate enough thrust to propel the crew module away from the launch vehicle during the initial phase of the flight, and the High-altitude Escape Motor (HEM), which will kick in at high altitude to provide enough pull to yank the crew module quickly to a safe distance from the rocket.

Pad abort: This is when the emergency escape has to take place moments after ignition. Both the HEM and LEM motors of the Crew Escape System are activated to rapidly transport the whole crew escape assembly and capsule to a safe distance in the shortest amount of time. In low-altitude abort scenarios, both motors are triggered; however, now, the crew module will splash down at a designated spot in the sea. In normal conditions, the Crew Escape System is effectively dead weight. Therefore the LEM – which is the pencil-like element of the tower – is jettisoned at a specific height to reduce weight while the HEM remains attached to the crew module.

The Soyuz T-10 rocket caught fire on the launchpad just before liftoff in 1983. The crew could evacuate safely thanks to the Crew Escape System. Similarly, one minute into the Blue Origin New Shepard flight NS-23 on September 12, 2022, a launch engine failed and the launch escape device worked as intended, allowing the capsule to detach and land safely.

Entering and staying in orbit

ISRO's Gaganyaan crew capsule, which will transport humans, consists of a pair of interconnected modules. The crew module serves as the living quarters for the crew and passengers if any while the service module carries the fuel, engines, control systems, etc.

By the time the capsule gets close to its intended orbit, all components of the crew escape systems will have been released into space. In this case, the capsule's onboard propulsion system, in the service module, will launch the crew module onto a sub-orbital trajectory if emergency evacuation is required.

In the event of an emergency after the spacecraft is in orbit, the service module's propulsion system and the crew module's thrusters will together attempt to reenter the earth's atmosphere, towards the ground.

At the ISS

Gaganyaan isn't expected to dock with any space station, but its crew will nonetheless be familiarised with the established procedures for docking.

After docking, the first step is to keep the capsule docked as a 'lifeboat' in the event of an emergency aboard the station. When the capsule that carried Williams and Wilmore to the ISS malfunctioned, NASA launched another with two vacant seats and docked it to the ISS during their mission. There were two capsules at any time – one SpaceX Crew Dragon and one Russian Soyuz – with passenger capacity to fly them back.

The space station is also to have a 'safe refuge' space where its occupants could go to escape any danger, such as a fire, collision with space debris, or higher doses of radiation released in a solar flare. This area can be airlocked and kept apart from the rest of the module.

Returning to the earth

The most challenging part of spaceflight is reentry. Orbiting the earth is like riding a bicycle: in order to keep from falling down, you need to keep moving forward. Any capsule not firing its thrusters in orbit will slowly be pulled back by gravity and atmospheric drag. When reentry is desirable, the capsule will fire its thrusters accordingly to begin its descent, controlling its speed while also trying to ensure it lands in a particular region on the ground.

Once reentry has begun, atmospheric friction will heat the capsule's outer heat shield to up to 1,800° C. The crew in the crew module will be protected by the shield. Once the capsule has descended to a particular altitude, the crew will slow its descent using retrograde thrusters and deploy parachutes.

The Gaganyaan crew capsule will decelerate throughout reentry using a 10-parachute system. Its apex cover separation parachutes will deploy when it is 15.3 km from the ground and travelling at 276 m/s, After that, a pilot chute will deploy drogue parachutes, stabilising and decelerating the capsule to 70 m/s up to a height of 3 km. Then pilot parachutes will deploy and open the three primary canopies, reducing the drop speed to 10-12 m/s. The parachute will be disconnected once the capsule has splashed down using a pyrotechnic release mechanism.

T.V. Venkateswaran is a science communicator and visiting faculty member at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Mohali.

Space trouble

As of January, space accidents have killed 17 astronauts and 4 cosmonauts in five separate incidents out of around 676 people who have flown to space

The model of the Gaganyaan crew module, a spacecraft that will carry a crew of three astronauts into orbit and back to Earth displayed at the HAL stall, at the 8th edition of Bengaluru Space Expo 2024 (BSX), in Bengaluru on September 18, 2024. MURALI KUMAR. K

January 27, 1967: Three crew of Apollo-1 died at the launch pad when the electrical spark from a faulty wire ignited the pure oxygen in the crew cabin casing, raging fire

April 24, 1967: The parachute of Soyuz -1 did not open properly after the reentry, and the capsule hit the ground at high speed, tragically killing Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov

June 30, 1971: Three soviet cosmonauts, Georgy Dobrovolsky, Viktor Patsayev and Vladislav Volkov, completed their intended three-week stay aboard the Soviet space station Salyut-1 and undocked for reentry. Unfortunately, the cabin vent valve malfunctioned, and the whole crew quarters decompressed, and the crew were found dead inside the craft that safely landed

January 28, 1986: The Space Shuttle Challenger was destroyed 73 seconds after liftoff at an altitude of 15 kilometres, killing seven U.S. astronauts: Gregory Jarvis, Christa McAuliffe, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka, Judith Resnik, Michael J. Smith and Dick Scobee

February 1, 2003: The Space Shuttle Columbia disintegrated when the shuttle's thermal protection system (TPS) failed during reentry at an altitude of just under 65 kms to its destination killing six U.S. astronauts and one from Israel: Rick D. Husband, William C. McCool, Michael P. Anderson, David M. Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Clark and Israel's Ilan Ramon

NASA astronauts Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams. REUTERS

THE GIST

In 1967, three members of NASA's Apollo-1 crew met with tragedy when the crew capsule they were testing on a launchpad in Florida — even before the rocket took off — caught fire, killing all of them.

ISRO's Gaganyaan crew capsule, which will transport humans, consists of a pair of interconnected modules. The crew module serves as the living quarters for the crew and passengers if any while the service module carries the fuel, engines, control systems, etc.

The most challenging part of spaceflight is reentry. Orbiting the earth is like riding a bicycle: in order to keep from falling down, you need to keep moving forward.

Veerashaivas, Vokkaligas make parallel preparations

While the Veerashaiva mahasabha has planned its own survey, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar is holding a meeting of Congress MLAs belonging to the Vokkaliga community today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Ahead of a Cabinet meeting on Thursday where the contentious Socio-Economic and Educational Survey (caste census) report is scheduled to be debated, the two dominant communities of Karnataka which are opposed to the report, the Vokkaligas and the Veerashaiva-Lingayats, are making their own parallel preparations.

A file photo of an enumerator taking down details of a household during the caste census. The two dominant communities of Karnataka, the Vokkaligas and the Veerashaiva-Lingayats, are opposed to the report, which has been accepted by the government.

Roping in former judge

The Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha has decided to rope in a retired judge to help formulate its response and understand the nuances in the report better. According to the mahasabha's national secretary H.M. Renuka Prasanna, the outfit will seek inputs from the retired judge before the Cabinet meeting so that the mahasabha perspective can be expressed well.

He also said that the mahasabha will be conducting its own survey of the community members. "Independent of the caste census report being submitted to the government, we had decided to conduct a survey. Elections to the mahasabha at the district and the taluk level have just ended and once the whole process is completed, we will undertake the survey," he said.

Gathering opinion

Meanwhile, on Monday, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who belongs to the Vokkaliga community, announced that he would hold a meeting of Congress MLAs from the community on Tuesday at his official residence.

"We will gather everyone's opinion," he said. However, he said that he had not yet studied the report in its entirety and is the process of understanding it. "Our idea is to hold broad-based consultation and come with a consensus in an effort not to hurt any sentiments," he said.

The Veerashaiva mahasabha has also convened a meeting of legislators from the community on Wednesday. Later on the same day, a joint meeting of the mahasabha representatives with office-bearers of the Rajya Vokkaligara Sangha is likely to take place.

'Make stand known'

Meanwhile, alleging that there is confusion within the government on the caste census report which is indicated by Ministers speaking in different voices, BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra has urged the government to make known its stand.

"When the Chief Minister says one thing, the Deputy Chief Minister says another. Ministers M.B. Patil and G. Parameshwara give differing statements. There is confusion within the ruling party," Mr. Vijayendra told presspersons in Bengaluru.

Removal of exemption of creamy layer concept for most BCs termed 'unfair'

Sharath S. Srivatsa
BENGALURU

CASTE CENSUS REPORT

The proposed removal of exemption of creamy layer concept for "most backward classes" in Category 1-A has been termed "unfair" to the castes that have mostly remained outside the realm of public employment.

While currently the creamy layer concept is not applicable to Category 1, the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes headed by K. Jayaprakash Hegde in the backward classes classification report submitted as part of the Socio-Economic and Educational Survey (caste census) report to the government has recommended removing this exemption.

Category 1-A has 46 castes/ sub castes from nomadic and semi nomadic castes identified by Karnataka in 1966. This category also proposes to provide reservation for orphan children. Similarly, some of the most backward classes have also been added in Category 1-B. Both Category 1-A and 1-B have been culled out of the current Category 1 and some castes from Category 2-A, including the Kurubas, the Madiwalas, the Savithas, and the Kumbaras, among others. They have been moved to Category 1-B by the Mr. Hegde-led commission.

Current reservation matrix for backward classes (32%)

Category	reservation
Category 1	4%
Category 2-A	15%
Category 2-B	4%
Category 3-A	4%
Category 3-B	5%

Proposed reservation matrix (51%)

Category 1-A	6%
Category 1-B	12%
Category 2-A	10%
Category 2-B	8%
Category 3-A	7%
Category 3-B	8%

> We found literacy level to be around 50% in some of these nomadic and semi nomadic castes. Since Independence, no MP or MLA has been elected from nomadic and semi-nomadic communities
>
> **K.N. LINGAPPA,** Member of H. Kantharaj Commission

Justifying the introduction of creamy layer concept to Category 1-A and 1-B, the commission has argued that some have become "*crorepatis*" through their business and others have identified themselves in politics. Besides there is intense competition intensifying among the castes in Category 1. The commission said that it is difficult for children of labourers and farmers in rural areas to compete with the rich, who are likely to corner all benefits of reservation.

However, K.N. Lingappa, who served as the member of H. Kantharaj Commission, said, "We found literacy level to be around 50% in some of these nomadic and semi nomadic castes. Since Independence, no MP or MLA has been elected from nomadic and semi-nomadic communities. Because the literacy level is low, posts, especially those that are technical in nature, cannot be filled owing to the absence of qualified personnel. By adopting creamy layer concept for this category, those qualified will end up being kept out."

He said that out of the 95 castes/sub castes in the current Category 1, 46 nomadic and semi nomadic has had no political representation. "Even if one includes all backward classes in Category 1 and 2A, only 20 to 25 castes have or had elected representatives in Parliament and the Assembly."

Mr. Lingappa said that the current 4% reservation extended to Category 1 that has 95 most backward castes itself is too meagre. In fact, citing the earlier Ravi Varma Kumar Commission, he said that the creamy layer concept should be removed across all categories.

A former chairperson of the commission, who did not wish to be named, told *The Hindu* that the recommendation should have specifically identified the castes that have improved in terms of economic and political status, since the statute allows removal of castes that have overcome backwardness from the list.

On the question of removing creamy layer, he said: "The recommendation does not consider social backwardness, a crucial indicator in arriving at overall backwardness. A few individuals making a mark does not show the mobility of the entire caste. You cannot apply creamy layer concept on communities living in makeshift tents."

BJP accuses govt. of unleashing 'tax assault' on people

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Opposition BJP on Monday accused the Congress government in Karnataka of unleashing a "tax assault" on people of the State.

Addressing a press conference in Bengaluru, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok remarked that the Congress government was indulging in bringing in a series of new taxes.

Referring to the response of Congress leaders to the BJP's ongoing Janakrosha Yatre against price rise and the Congress decision to stage a counter-protest, Mr. Ashok maintained that this was proof that the BJP's struggle were successful.

"Earlier, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah returned the MUDA sites allotted to his wife after the BJP took out a protest march. This time too, our protest will yield the desired results," he said.

BJP State president B.Y. Vijayendra accused the Congress government of blaming the Union government and spreading misinformation to hide its own failures.

BJP leaders B.Y. Vijayendra and R. Ashok addressing presspersons in Bengaluru on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He claimed that during the UPA government's rule from 2004 to 2014, petrol prices increased by 90% and that of diesel by 96%. However, under the NDA government from 2014 to 2024, petrol prices rose from ₹72 to 100 – a 38% increase. Diesel prices increased from ₹55 to ₹90 – a 63% increase, he said.

He alleged that despite rising oil prices during the UPA regime, there were no public welfare schemes during Manmohan Singh's tenure, and instead there were major scandals such as the 2G scam, coal scam, and the Commonwealth Games scam, totalling to a corruption of around ₹12 lakh crore.

Siddaramaiah challenges Modi to bring in law similar to SCSP-TSP Act

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

On the occasion of Ambedkar Jayanti, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah challenged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to show his commitment to the welfare of SCs/STs by bringing in a legislation on the lines of the Karnataka Scheduled Castes Sub-Plan and Tribal-Sub Plan (Planning, Allocation and Utilisation of Financial Resources) Act.

He threw the challenge to the Prime Minister while participating in a programme organised at the KPCC office in Bengaluru.

"Is it possible for you to implement such a legislation at the national level?" the Chief Minister asked.

The recent session of the State legislature had adopted a resolution urging the Centre to enact such a legislation at the national level.

He called upon the Congress workers to have the courage to call out the "lies of the RSS and the BJP."

He asked the Congress workers to have ideological clarity.

"The *Manuvaadis* have suddenly started showing newfound love towards Ambedkar. But it is these *Manuvaadis* who first opposed the Constitution as well as its implementation," he said.

He said Ambedkar, in a letter on January 18, 1952, said that Veer Savarkar and Shripad Amrit Dange were responsible for his electoral defeat.

But the BJP was still carrying a tale that the Congress had defeated Ambedkar. In this context, the Congress workers should have courage to set the record straight by telling the truth, he said.

Folk artists performing during the birth anniversary celebrations of B.R. Ambedkar in front of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Bengaluru to have tallest statue of Ambedkar

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday announced that a museum dedicated to B.R. Ambedkar will be set up in Bengaluru, besides a statue of the architect of the Constitution. The proposed statue would be the tallest in the country, he said.

CM defends reservation for Muslims under OBC quota

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Coming down heavily on the Opposition BJP for its repeated remarks on "Muslim appeasement", Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Monday defended the government's move to provide 4% reservation for Muslims in public contracts under OBC quota, questioning why it should not be done.

This came on a day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while speaking at Hisar in Haryana, accused the Congress government in Karnataka of "snatching away the rights of SCs, STs and OBCs", and giving "reservation based on religion" in public contracts.

Defending his government's move, Mr. Siddaramaiah said the Congress government is for giving strength to anyone who is economically and socially weak. "This is the mission and commitment of the Congress. I stand with those who have been deprived of opportunities and those who have not got justice," the Chief Minister said at a programme.

Mr. Shivakumar, who is also the KPCC president, said the Congress and the government's aim is to uplift those who are not financially stable and to bring them to the mainstream. "To achieve this the party will look at every section of society. Who says we are snatching opportunities from anyone? Opportunity is being given to everyone, on the contrary," he said.

The Chief Minister said reservation in public contracts has been given to give strength to Dalits, Backward Classes, and minorities.

Elected

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chinmaya P. Chigateri has been elected president of the Executive Committee of Alliance de Française Bangalore for the term 2025-2027.

The newly-elected office-bearers include Anush Solomon Joy and Ramaya Bharadwaj K.B. as vice-presidents, Abhishek S. Iyengar as treasurer, and Aditya Surana as joint secretary.

Other elected members of the committee are Chander P. Mannar, Punya Gopal, and M. Anand B.G.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY HYDERABAD
DIRECTORATE OF UNIVERSITY FOREIGN RELATIONS
Kukatpally, Hyderabad – 500 085, Telangana (India).
A-GRADE

FN/PIO/CIWG/NRI ADMISSIONS NOTIFICATION (2025-26)

Applications are invited from the eligible Foreign Nationals/Persons of Indian Origin/Children of Indian Workers in Gulf Countries/Non Resident Indian candidates seeking admission into **B.Tech/B.Tech (IDP)/BBA(Data Analytics)/BBA (Regular)/ M.Tech/ M.Sc/MBA/ MCA/ M.Pharmacy /Ph.D** courses for the Academic Year 2025-26. The application form is available in the DUFR office or it can be download from the website or apply through **online application** available on the University website **www.jntuhdufr.com, www.jntuh.ac.in.** The filled in application is to be submitted along with required documents and a DD of **Rs.1000/-** in favour of **"The Registrar, UFR Account, JNTUH", payable at Hyderabad.** For further details **www.jntuhdufr.com, www.jntuh.ac.in.**

Date: 15.04.2025. -Sd/-
DIPR R.O. No. : 20-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2025-26, Date:14-04-2025. **REGISTRAR**

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (Through KPP Portal Only)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount Put to Tender(Rs.) / EMD Amount(Rs.)	Last date & Time for submission of tender	Date and time for opening of tender
1	North West-2	BWSSB/EENW-2/TO/PB/ 39/2025-26 DATE:09.04.2025	Rs. 20,48,181/- / Rs. 50,000/-	23.04.2025 upto 4.00 p.m.	24.04.2025 after 4.30 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer(North West-2)

Office of the Chief Engineer (Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, K.G. Road, Bangalore - 560 009.

2	Kaveri (Operation & Maintenance-2)	BWSSB/EE(K-O&M)-2/PB/ 07/2025-26 DATE:05.04.2025 (Reserved for SC) (2nd Call)	Rs. 48,18,082/- / Rs. 48,500/-	14.05.2025 upto 4.00 p.m.	15.05.2025 after 5.00 p.m.

Sd/- Executive Engineer(Kaveri-Operation & Maintenance-2)

The details regarding the tender and participating in the e-procurement process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/JA/188/2025-26

IN THE COURT OF THE SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE AND JMFC, AT DEVANAHALLI

Misc. Pet. No. 39/2022
IN O.S. NO. 757/2006

BETWEEN

Mr. Mekapati Abhinav Reddy,
S/o Sri. M Raja Gopal Reddy,
Aged about 41 years,
Residing at #66/2 & 66/3,Siddapura Road, Nelluruhalli Village, Opp. Balaji Temple, Bengaluru East Taluk, Bengaluru-560 066. Karnataka .....***PETITIONER***

AND

Smt. T N Rathnamma & Others
.....***REPONDENTS***

NOTICE/SUMMONS TO THE RESPONDENT NO. 1

To,

R1. Smt. T.N. Rathnamma,
D/o Narayanappa, Aged about 61 years
R/at Tarahunase Village, Jala Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk

Whereas, the above named Petitioner has instituted a miscellaneous petition against you in Misc.Pet.No. 39/2022 before the Principal Senior Civil Judge and JMFC, At Devanahalli seeking to set aside the Judgement and Decree dated: 17.10.2006 passed by Hon'ble Senior Civil Judge and JMFC, Devanahalli.

You are hereby summoned to appear before this Court on the 24th day of June, 2025 at 11AM in person or through advocate/pleader to answer questions to the claim and you are directed to produce on that day all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your evidence. Failing which the petition will be heard and determined as ex-parte.

Given under my hand & seal of the Court, this the 7th day of April, 2025.

By Order of the Court
Sd/-
Chief Ministerial Officer
Senior Civil Judge and JMFC, Court Devanahalli

Lawyers Inc.
Advocates & Solicitors
#15/2, V.S. Raju Road
12th Block, Kumara Park West
Bengaluru - 560 020

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that Sri K.T. Narayanappa, S/o Late Tippaiah, acquired the property bearing Sy. No. 57, situated at Kattigenahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk (previously Bangalore North Taluk), measuring 15 guntas, through a family partition and subsequent family arrangement. Subsequently, he formed residential sites and sold Site No. 7, having Assessment No. 57, situated at Kattigenahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk (previously Bangalore North Taluk). Over a period of time, several transactions took place, and eventually, Mr. Bharath purchased the Vacant Site No. 7, along with an old building, under Assessment No. 57, located within the jurisdiction of BBMP Ward No. 5 (Jakkur), at Kattigenahalli Village, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk (previously Bangalore North Taluk), measuring 27.5 feet East to West and 40 feet North to South, totally admeasuring 1100 square feet, under a registered Sale Deed. The said property is more fully described in the Schedule hereunder. Mr. Bharath, being the absolute and lawful owner, has agreed to sell the same to our client and has also executed an Agreement of Sale in this regard.

All persons claiming any interest in the Schedule Property or any part thereof, whether by way of sale, gift, lease, inheritance, exchange, mortgage, charge, lien, trust, possession, easement, attachment, or otherwise howsoever, are hereby required to make such claims known to the undersigned at the address mentioned below within 15 days from the date of this notice. Failing which, the proposed sale will be completed without any reference to such claims, and any such rights or interests, if any, shall be deemed to have been **waived.**

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of the EASTERN PORTION of the Residential Property bearing Vacant Site No.7, BBMP Katha No.688/57/7 (E.P), Assessment No.57, PID No 30817093300 having E-Katha bearing No.6946/688/57/7 (E.P), presently falls under the jurisdiction of BBMP Ward No.5 (Jakkur), situated at KATTIGENAHALLI VILLAGE, Jala Hobli, Yelahanka Taluk, Previously Bangalore North Taluk, measuring East to West 27.5 Feet, North to South 40 Feet and totally admeasuring 1100 Square Feet along with building standing thereon; **BOUNDED ON THE :-**

East by : Site No.6; West by : Remaining Portion of same Site No.7
North by : Road. South by : Private Property

Sunil P Prasad, Tapasya Law Chambers
No.1954, 20th E Cross, Block 'C', Sahakar Nagar,
Bengaluru - 560 092. Ph: 080 23623483, M: 963 2222 483
Email: sunil@tapasyalaw.in : tapasyalaw@gmail.com

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

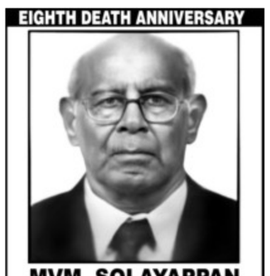
BIRTH CENTENARY

BIRTH CENTENARY
15.04.2025

N.S.THANGAM (1925-1992) **K.S.B.ESWARAN** (1913-1994)
Forever in our Hearts
Sons, Daughters-in-Law, Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

EIGHTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY



MVM. SOLAYAPPAN
Not a single moment goes by without you in our thoughts, Life only gets livable knowing and believing you are watching over us always. Forever in our hearts.
Remembered by
MVM Family Pallathur Madras Tubular Rivets Thirumazhisai

ABSTRACT

Toxic fumes: Stubble is burned to remove paddy crop residues from a field on the outskirts of Sangrur district in Punjab on November 2, 2024. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

How governmentality exacerbates the problem of farmers' stubble burning

A new study by researchers Sujit Raghunathrao Jagadale and Javed M. Shaikh at the Indian Institute of Management, Amritsar analyses the problem of stubble burning from the lens of 'governmentality' and market failure

Jacob P Koshy

Jagadale, S. R., and, Shaikh, J. M, 'Governmentality and Marketing System Failure: The Case of Stubble Burning and Climate Change in Neoliberal India', *Journal of Macromarketing*, 2025
https://doi.org/10.1177/02761467251318608

Come November, the Indo-Gangetic Plain is often clouded in a pall of pollution. The cessation of monsoon winds from the preceding four months and a drop in temperatures lead to pollutants from year-round sources, such as vehicles, power plants, construction dust and other suspended particulate matter, persisting as a black shroud because of the formation of an 'inversion layer'. This means that these particles aren't 'flushed out' from the region by the stronger winds at the higher atmospheric reaches. Add to this the contribution of stubble burning. Particulate matter from the burning of farm stubble – rice chaff – by farmers in Punjab, and to a smaller extent Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh – is added to this haze, worsening the already noxious air quality in Delhi and several other north Indian cities. Farm stubble is burnt in October and November because it is the cheapest method employed by farmers to prepare their soil for Rabi wheat.

A wealth of correlational studies in the last two decades have linked particulate matter from stubble burning and winds originating from Punjab and Haryana to pollution levels in Delhi. In the case of Punjab, during winter, 54% of the time the wind from the State blew towards Delhi, it led to a spike in air pollution; when the wind originated from Haryana, the figure stood at 27%. Every additional fire incident was correlated with an increase in PM2.5 levels of 12.44 units. Studies over the years, most recently in 2023 by a consortium of IIT Kanpur, IIT Delhi, TERI, and Airshed, Kanpur, found that from mid-October to the end of November 2022, the role of stubble burning to air quality was on average 22% and peaked to as much as 35%. This is fairly consistent with previous studies that have estimated the contribution of stubble burning to range from 20%-40%. Many studies have also examined causes for farmers actions. The prescriptions also often analyse what may be changed that could incentivise farmers to cease from such burning.

How policy affects pollution

A new study by researchers Sujit Raghunathrao Jagadale and Javed M. Shaikh at the Indian Institute of Management, Amritsar analyses the problem from the lens of 'governmentality' and market failure. 'Governmentality' is a concept by French sociologist and philosopher, Michel Foucault that refers to how institutions of power – in this case the government – rather than employing explicitly coercive measures induce citizens to adopt self-policing or self-regulating behaviour to govern themselves.

Their study shows that governmentality can end up being counterproductive. The state's implicit directive to farmers to keep increasing grain output ends up promoting "suboptimal behaviours, like stubble burning, among farmers within India's struggling agricultural marketing system."

India's "neoliberal policies," such as the Minimum Support Price (MSP) system, paradoxically exacerbates the issue. While MSP guarantees procurement prices for staple crops like wheat and rice, it ends up incentivising mono-cropping, leaving farmers dependent on short-term, unsustainable methods. The study argues that state and market forces create a cycle of marginalisation, pushing farmers toward stubble burning as a survival tactic.

The authors relied on semi-structured interviews with 18 farmers across three Punjab districts (Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Tarn Taran) and an analysis of national newspaper articles. The farmers interviewed ranged from smallholders (2-5 acres) to larger landowners, capturing diverse economic backgrounds. Interviews focused on farmers' decision-making, perceptions of state policies, and interactions with market actors. What they found was that the Union government's MSP policy prioritises wheat and rice production, discouraging crop diversification. Farmers face contradictory signals: the state penalises stubble burning but also offers no affordable alternatives. Farmers also viewed the state as favouring urban-industrial interests ("India") over rural communities ("Bharat"). For example, while stubble burning is vilified, industrial pollution is overlooked. The farmers saw themselves as reliant on middlemen (*arhatias*) who control crop prices, credit access, and market linkages. Farmers sell produce at artificially low prices set by *arhtias*, who profit by reselling at market rates. Debt bondage is common: farmers borrow from *arhtias* for seeds or emergencies, cementing dependency. One farmer noted, "Commission agents deduct expenses from our next income, trapping us in cycles of debt." Stagnant MSP rates (for example, wheat prices rose only 5% over a decade) fail to cover rising cultivation costs, including labour and equipment. The study's novel contribution is to reposition stubble burning not as individual negligence but as a systemic outcome of distorted marketing systems and neo-liberal governance.

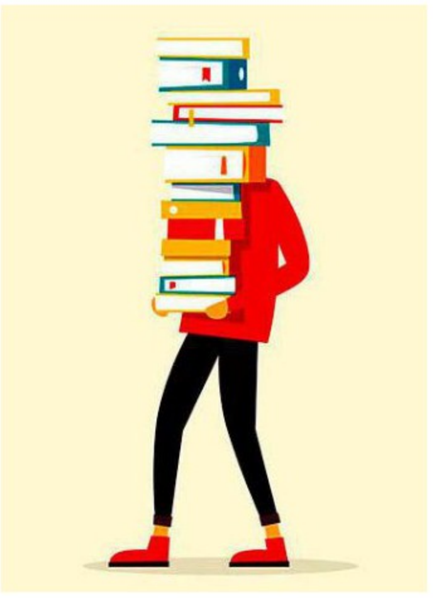
Plausible remedies

As solutions, they suggest that remedial interventions primarily focus on developing a market for stubble and stubble-based products, such as fodder, energy products like pellets and packaging materials, aiming to boost farmers' income while simultaneously addressing climate change challenges. For this approach to be successful, efforts are needed to strengthen the value chain through diverse technologies within an enabling ecosystem. Currently, there is a significant lack of an efficient market mechanism for farm-waste, underscoring the need for policy and market interventions to bridge this gap. Although such interventions may require time to be implemented effectively, they necessitate the involvement of stakeholders, including state and market actors, across the value chain.

Regulatory interventions could be conceptualised at three levels: prohibiting stubble burning, managing it through selective permits, and promoting stubble usage by incentivising stubble-based products. Here, active participation from state actors is critical.

A key intervention involves ensuring that farmers receive fair prices for their produce by addressing existing inefficiencies within the market system. The commodities market in India is deeply embedded in socio-political structures, as previously discussed, and requires state-led efforts to enhance price transparency and fairness to support farm incomes.

Moreover, the socio-economic pressure on farmers to engage in aspirational consumption – often detrimental due to limited income –should be acknowledged. Addressing this issue may benefit from fostering cultural change, where socio-cultural organisations, including religious groups, could play a role in de-marketing non-essential aspirational consumption, the authors conclude.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know Your English

K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran

"Who do you think will win the World Cup?"

"Oh, I don't know. Maybe..."

"...I'm sure India will win. We have won the World Cup in 1983, you know and..."

".... 'We won the World Cup in 83' and not 'We have won the World Cup in 83'."

"But why can't I say, 'we have won the World Cup in 83'."

"It's because you are referring to a specific time. It's okay to say, 'We've won the World Cup', but you cannot say, 'We've won the World Cup in 1983'."

"I see. So, whenever you indicate a specific time, you use the simple past tense. Is that what you're saying?"

"Yes, that's right. For example, you can say, 'Becker won the Australian Open in 1996. But you cannot say, 'Becker has won the Australian Open in 1996'."

"So, it's wrong to say, 'I have been to Bombay last year'."

"Yes, it's wrong. If you want to mention the year, you'll have to say, 'I went to Bombay last year'. But if you don't want to mention when you went to Bombay, then you could say, 'I have been to Bombay'."

"So, I can either say, 'I finished my home work an hour ago', or 'I have finished my home work'. Am I right?"

"Exactly! And talking about school and home work, how did you do in your test?"

"Everybody failed."

"Everybody flunked the test."

"Everybody what?"

"Flunked. It's spelt f..l..u..n..k. The 'u' sounds like the 'u' in 'hut', 'but' and 'cut'." .

"And 'flunk' means to fail, I suppose."

"Right again. When I was in school, I kept flunking Hindi."

"I keep flunking in physics and chemistry."

"But tell me, how did your teacher manage to flunk the whole class?"

"I don't even want to talk about it. What's the book you're reading?"

"It's a novel."

"Is it interesting?"

"It's dry as dust."

"Dry as dust! Does it mean it's boring?"

"Precisely! When you refer to something ' as being 'dry as dust', it means it's 'not at all engaging'. For example. 'The new textbook prescribed for my English class is dry as dust."

"Can I say, the movie that I saw yesterday was dry as dust."

"Yes. Here's another example. The speech the Minister gave yesterday was dry as dust."

"Most political speeches are dry as dust, I suppose."

"How would you know? How many political speeches have you heard?"

"Plenty. In fact, I have heard... oops, sorry, I heard one last week. And it was dry as dust."

Published in The Hindu on February 20, 1996.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on Leonard da Vinci on the genius' 573rd birthday

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Under which Florentine master artist did Leonardo do his apprenticeship?

QUESTION 2
What is common to Atlanticus, Arundel, Leicester, Madrid I and II?

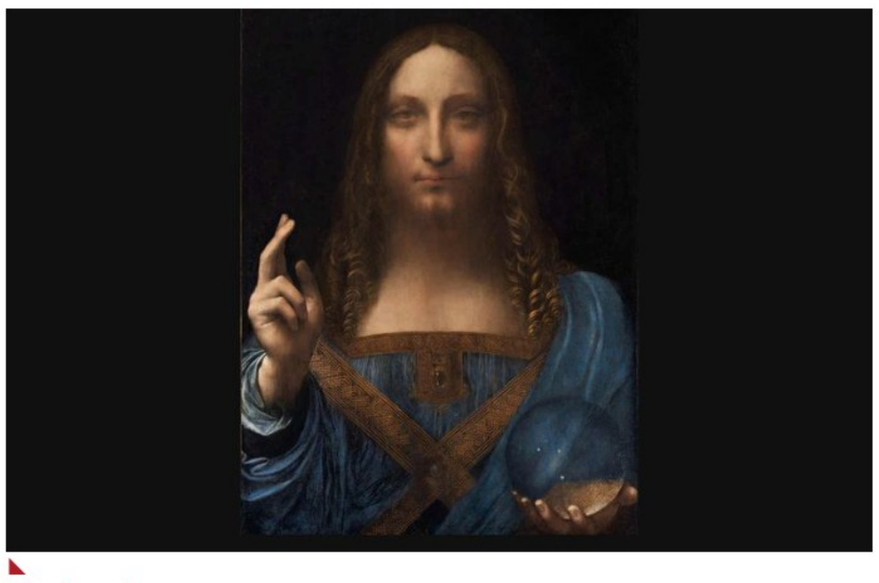
QUESTION 3
The most famous work of Da Vinci is of course the 'Mona Lisa'. Can you tell whose portrait is the painting?

QUESTION 4
Simple one. Which is Da Vinci's largest painting, covering over 40 square metres, and found on the former refectory of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan?

QUESTION 5
Name the technique Leonardo used in many of his paintings to create a soft, gradual transition between tones and colours?

QUESTION 6
What is special about the work 'The Virgin and Laughing Child' housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London?

QUESTION 7
What is the more common name for the portrait of Cecilia Gallerani, the lover of his patron Ludovico Sforza?



Visual question:
Name this work attributed to da Vinci which was sold at a Chistie's auction for a world record $450m in 2017 to a private collector.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The first detailed anatomy of the human body was elaborated by this person. **Ans: Andreas Vesalius**
2. William Harvey's contributions in 1628. **Ans: Describing circulation of blood and functions of the heart**
3. This person invented the microscope. **Ans: Anton Leeuwenhoek**
4. This invention of Crawford Long changed the field of surgery forever. **Ans: He started using ether for surgical anaesthesia**
5. This first recipient of the Nobel prize for Physics got the award for this. **Ans: Wilhelm Roentgen; X-rays**
Visual: Identify this Scottish scientist and his achievement. **Ans: Alexander Fleming; Inventor of the penicillin**
Early Birds: Dodo Jayaditya| Haridas Pal| Soumendra Banerjee| Anju Sharma| Piyali Tuli

Word of the day

Chary:
characterised by great caution and wariness

Synonym: cagey

Usage: *She had been chary of telling the truth.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/charypro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /'tʃɛəɹi/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

‘A viable population of lions can easily be established in the space available at Kuno’

It has been 12 years since the Supreme Court ordered the translocation of the Asiatic lions to Kuno in an attempt to provide them with a second home, but this never materialised. Bengaluru-based wildlife biologist and conservation scientist Ravi Chellam, who has been involved with the conservation of Asiatic lions since 1985, details some of the issues surrounding their conservation

INTERVIEW

Ravi Chellam

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

Last month, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) published its first Green Status assessment, a relatively new global standard of measurement envisioned to complement the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, for the lion (*Panthera leo*). And it does not paint a happy picture for the big cat. According to the assessment, the lion has been classified as ‘Largely Depleted’, which, alongside its ‘Vulnerable’ status on the IUCN Red List, does not bode well for the animal.

Ravi Chellam, a Bengaluru-based wildlife biologist and conservation scientist who has been involved with the conservation of Asiatic lions since 1985, in an interview with *The Hindu*, offers his perspective on the Green Status assessment for the lion, the history of lion conservation in India and how the introduction of the African cheetah into the Kuno National Park has further jeopardised the fate of lions in India. Chellam is also the CEO of Metastring Foundation, Coordinator of Biodiversity Collaborative and a member of Coexistence Consortium.

Excerpts from the interview:

IUCN’s first Green Status assessment report for the lion states that the species is now ‘Largely Depleted’. What are the implications of this assessment?

The ‘Largely Depleted’ status of lions as determined by the IUCN’s Green Status assessment indicates that human impacts prevent the lion as a species from being fully ecologically functional across its natural distribution range. Lion habitats and populations have suffered extensive fragmentation, resulting in severe population declines across their range, which includes instances of local extinction, for example in North Africa, Southwest Asia and through much of its historical distribution in India.

As a top predator, lions play an important role in the ecological functioning of the habitats in which they occur. Once lion populations are fragmented, isolated, suffer decline and become locally extinct, they are no longer able to play their ecological role which will have multiple impacts across the trophic levels starting with the behaviour and ecology of co-occurring predators like leopards, prey species, distribution and regeneration of various plant species which constitute the natural vegetation of these habitats and other components of the ecosystem like local hydrology.

Asiatic lions (right) in Sakkarbaugh Zoo in Junagadh, Gujarat. FILE PHOTOS

Due to the limited space, a significant number of lions in the Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary are living outside the protected area, with some lions even swimming across to the island of Diu. What is the impact of this dispersal on human-animal conflict?

Conflict is often a reflection of the attitudes of a person, a group of people, a section of the society or a local community. The mere presence of lions or even the predation of livestock, tragic and inconvenient as it may be, is often not viewed as conflict in and around Gir forest, including places as far as Diu. Most people are very accepting of the lion’s presence.

The situation does change when people are injured by lions, and more so when some of those injured die. To take a more realistic perspective, the question really to ask is why are the number of lion attacks on people so low? Given the very frequent interactions of lions and people, we should expect a far higher number of lion attacks on people. We have around 300 lions living outside the protected area in human-dominated habitats. In many ways, this is the magic of India, where both wild animals and people find ways to coexist.

Several Gir lions have died in the last few years, with reasons ranging from illness (particularly due to the highly infectious canine distemper) to old age, fights, and accidental death. You were among the earliest voices pushing for a second home for Gir lions to ensure their long-term survival. Tell us why it was, and why it still is, important for some of them to be relocated?

The Indian Board for Wildlife, in its first meeting in 1952, discussed the idea of translocating lions from Gir to establish additional wild populations of free-ranging lions. The idea is not something new or novel. It is just plain common sense. Translocation is a conservation tool to establish additional populations of an endangered species at sites which are located in their former distribution range.

When a sub-species like the Asiatic lion is reduced to a single population with all members of the wild population restricted to a single site, the conservation risks it faces increase tremendously. Translocation not only aims to establish additional free-ranging wild populations of Asiatic lions. It also aims to ensure geographical isolation to reduce risks.

Through its order dated April 15, 2013, the Supreme Court directed the Government of India (GoI) to translocate lions from Gir to Kuno within six months in letter and spirit. It is unfortunate that the GoI has not yet complied with this order.

Instead, a bunch of African cheetahs were introduced at Kuno. Can you trace the story of how this came about?

It is really by sleight of hand and by playing a game of smoke and mirrors that the GoI has hoodwinked the Supreme Court and introduced African cheetahs in Kuno while the lions are still to be moved from Gir. The Supreme Court in the Lion Translocation matter made its position abundantly clear, stating that “our top priority is to protect Asiatic lions, an endangered species and to provide a second home” and that “the decision taken by MoEF for introduction of African cheetahs first to Kuno and then Asiatic lion, is arbitrary and illegal.”

Unfortunately, the State government of Gujarat has responded with acts characterised by impunity. Faced with the adamant intransigence of the Gujarat government, GoI continued to neglect and delay the translocation of lions, and in 2016, it filed a review petition through the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) seeking permission to explore sites other than Kuno to introduce African cheetahs. In summary, the NTCA sought clarification from the Court that its 2013 Order did not impose a blanket ban on introducing African cheetahs in India and sought permission to explore additional sites to assess their suitability for introducing them.

The final order of the court issued on January 28, 2020, allowed the experimental introduction of African cheetahs at carefully chosen sites and the project was to be implemented under the supervision of a court-appointed Expert Committee.

Despite this, the Cheetah Action Plan released by the Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in January 2022 prioritised only Kuno for introducing African cheetahs. To rub salt into the wounds, in May 2023, the GoI appointed a new Steering Committee to guide the implementation of the project, effectively sidelining the Supreme Court-appointed expert committee.

In the two-and-a-half years since the first African cheetahs were introduced to Kuno, several adults and cubs have died. Most recently, there have also been conflicts between local people and these animals. You are an outspoken critic of the African Cheetah introduction project. What were and are your main concerns?

Despite both lions and cheetahs being large cats, they are very different types of species, and their ecological requirements vary tremendously. Cheetahs are unique compared to lions, tigers and leopards in that they exist in very low densities. Wild free-ranging African cheetahs have average home range sizes from 126 to more than 1600 sq. km. When a species naturally exists in low densities and is very wide-ranging, space and quality of habitat become very critical to it.

Cheetah, being the smallest of the large cats, has adapted to coexist with the larger cats by living in very low densities and also being more diurnal in its activities to avoid potential encounters and conflicts with the larger cats. India currently does not have the required extent of good quality habitats, 4,000 to 10,000 sq. km, to host a viable population of free-ranging cheetahs. This has been our primary objection, in addition to respecting the Rule of Law.

As already explained, the Supreme Court has made it very clear that Asiatic lions should be translocated to Kuno and African cheetahs should not be released at Kuno. Despite this, the GoI has chosen to do what it has done. Lions exist in much higher densities, and a viable population can easily be established in the space available at Kuno.

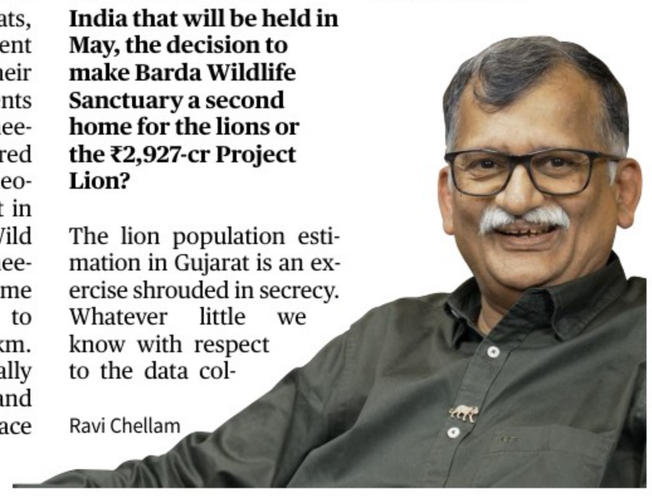
What are your thoughts about some of the recent conversations around lion conservation, such as the upcoming five-yearly population estimate of lions in India that will be held in May, the decision to make Barda Wildlife Sanctuary a second home for the lions or the ₹2,927-cr Project Lion?

The lion population estimation in Gujarat is an exercise shrouded in secrecy. Whatever little we know with respect to the data collection and analytical methods used does not inspire much confidence. The raw data and the details of the methods used are seldom shared in the public domain, and it does seem like the methods adopted are not very scientific nor statistically robust.

This unscientific approach and continued defiance of the 2013 Supreme Court Order are reflected in the decision to make Barda Wildlife Sanctuary a second home for the lions. As the crow flies, Barda is barely 100 km from Gir, so there is no geographical isolation from Gir. Moreover, Barda is only 192 sq. km in area, too small to hold a viable population of lions.

Leaving aside ecological and conservation realities, it should not be forgotten that the 15th April 2013 order of the Supreme Court of India, directing the Government of India to translocate lions from Gir to Kuno within six months in letter and spirit, is still very much the law of the land. Hence, we must focus on translocating lions from Gir to Kuno, independent of what happens elsewhere, including in Barda.

Also, I do not view Project Lion as a positive development at all. As many of us are aware, throwing big money at conservation almost always results in ecological destruction; not to mention the financial leakages, and the displacement of local communities, which in turn can only have negative consequences both for nature and people. This is typically a distraction tactic.



Ravi Chellam

Surgery helps 12-year-old girl fight chronic digestive disorder

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Surgical management of a chronic genetic digestive disorder in a private hospital in the city has given hope of a normal life to a 12-year-old girl from Koppal district in north Karnataka.

Ever since she was a baby, the girl – Ruchika (name changed) – has been experiencing gastrointestinal symptoms, including greenish vomiting, upper abdominal fullness, constipation, and failure to gain weight. Despite multiple evaluations and treatments at multiple centres, no definitive diagnosis could be made. At 12 years of age, her body weight was just 15 kg.

She was then brought to Manipal Hospitals, Old Airport Road, and her condition was categorised as chronic gastrointestinal dysfunction and diagnosed as Mitochondrial Neurogastrointestinal Encephalomyopathy (MNGIE).

Following an evaluation by a multidisciplinary team of doctors led by Srikanth K.P., Consultant - Paediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology, the girl underwent a series of tests.

Doctors say this is the first reported case of Mitochondrial Neurogastrointestinal Encephalomyopathy being managed surgically in India. ISTOCK/MORSA IMAGES

Rare genetic disorder

Dr. Srikanth said Mitochondrial Neurogastrointestinal Encephalopathy is a rare genetic disorder caused by mutations in the TYMP gene, leading to thymidine phosphorylase enzyme deficiency.

Given the severity of her gastrointestinal symptoms and progressive nutritional decline, doctors planned a surgical intervention.

In August last year, the girl (who was aged 11 then) underwent sleeve gastrectomy to reduce gastric volume, gastrostomy for decompression, and placement of a feeding gastrojejunostomy (GJ tube) to bypass the non-functioning upper GI tract, Dr. Srikanth said.

Claiming that it is the first reported case of MNGIE managed surgically in India, the doctor said post-operatively, the girl’s vomiting reduced significantly, and her nutritional status began to improve.

“She gained 2 kg over the last few months, reaching a weight of 17 kg. Luckily, she tolerated GJ feeds well and was able to take minimal oral intake without major discomfort,” the doctor added.

Theatre community to pay tributes to A.N. Ramesh today

Ramesh was the backbone of many Kannada theatre troupes, doing backstage work ranging from lighting to production management

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Bengaluru’s theatre community is coming together on Tuesday at the Nayana Sabhagana in Kannada Bhavana, on J.C. Road, to honour the memory of lighting designer, production manager and backstage manager A.N. Ramesh.

Organised by Rangachandira (R) and Ranga Nayaka Trust, with the support of Sanchaya, the event pays tribute to Ramesh’s significant contributions towards amateur Kannada theatre.

Ramesh, who succumbed to injuries following a road rage incident back in 2013, was the backbone of many Kannada theatre troupes, said senior theatre practitioner Ganesh Shenoy.

“Ramesh was known as ‘Ramesh anna’ by many young theatre practitioners. He was loved by the amateur troupes for his skills and his humility. He charged very little or sometimes no money at all for the work he did. Almost every event that happened at Ravindra Kalakshetra back then was handled by him. He did everything from light design, making sets, backstage work, and more. It is close to a decade since he passed away, but he is still honoured by many technicians and artists,” Ganesh said.

A.N. Ramesh

As the theatre community is coming together to remember the late theatre personality, a bouquet of events has been planned for the evening, starting at 5 p.m. including theatre songs by Sanchaya, songs by Swaramrutha School of Music, presentation of scenes from Kuvempu’s play *Jalagara*, and *Matthe Vasantha* directed by Ganesh Shenoy will also be presented.

Senior theatre practitioners like Sreenivas G. Kappanna, Centre Stage Gangadhar, Shashidar Adapa, N.S. Chitrashekhar, Chandrashekar and Radhakrishna Hegde will share stories of their memory of Ramesh. Along with the line-up of programmes, two lighting designers T.M. Nagaraju and Manju Narayana will be felicitated.

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 15, 1975

Ban Orders in Tumkur after Clash and Arson

Tumkur, April 14: Mr. S S. Mechakshisundaram, District Magistrate, has promulgated prohibitory orders under Section 144 Cr. PC for a week from April 12 following a clash between two groups of people in which 20 huts were burnt down. A party of the Armed Reserve and the Fire Brigade were rushed to this place.

Mr. Nizamuddin DIG, who came here the same day, following the clash, told pressmen that 11 persons injured in the clash, were treated as out patients and three others were admitted in hospital.

Separate Industrial Estate for Harijans Urged

Bangalore, April 14: The Social Welfare Minister, Mr. Rachiah, today suggested the setting up of a separate industrial estate in Bangalore for Harijans and other backward communities.

Inaugurating the “Social Reforms Week” in the Community Hall, Murphy Town here, Mr. Rachiah called upon Harijans to banish fear and inferiority complex from their minds, so that they could make an effort to attain equal status with other forward communities. He wanted them to banish sects and sub-sects among themselves and forge unity for improving their status in society both socially and economically.

A sparkling legacy

The Sri Jayarama Seva Mandali is celebrating their diamond jubilee with a slew of events this month

Ranjani Govind

Time to celebrate (Clockwise from top left) Vocalist G Ravi Kiran, musician Ranjani Vasuki and vocalist Nagaraj Rao Havaldar will be performing at the Sri Jayarama Seva Mandali's Ramotsava. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Even the most amateur of classical musicians will be aware of the Sri Jayarama Seva Mandali's legacy of presenting music, dance and discourses in the city. "Much before the building came up and the Mandali celebrated Ramanavami on a makeshift pandal, my father RK Srikantan and I would perform to packed crowds in Jayanagar. The audiences would request Kannada kritis of Lord Rama, apart from works by the trinity of composers – Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Shyama Shastri," recalls Ramakanth Srikantan, who accompanied his father for more than six decades on many a classical stage.

Hindustani vocalist Pt Nagaraj Rao Havaldar's concert this year at the Mandali was truly one to remember. Congratulating them on their landmark anniversary, Nagaraj said the institute had begun promoting art in its true spirit, even before he had started learning music.

"No organisation is small and no artiste is bigger than art itself. Many such mandalis have put in a lot of effort to collect donations, spending it on logistics and arrangements, and to pay the artistes as well. Many a time, the costs far exceed the collection; rasikas as well as artistes should support such Seva Mandalis," says Nagaraj, who trained under Madhav Gudi in Kirana Gharana, and was inspired by the Jaipur Atrauli Gharana under the guidance of Panchakshara Swami Mattigatti.

Small beginnings

In the 1960s, when South Bengaluru began scouting for venues for cultural events, Kannada writer, grammarian and lexicographer G Venkatasubbiah (popularly known as GV) was instrumental in setting plans in motion. Later, he went on to supervise the construction of the Jayarama Seva Mandali Auditorium in Jayanagar in 1965.

"What started off as a venue for *Ramayana Paarayana* and music concerts, soon had leading stars such as Balamurali Krishna, RK Srikantan and flute Ramani, Veena Doreswamy Iyengar and young violinists Ganesh-Kumaresh performing there," says Mandali Secretary H Sundara Murthy.

He adds, "That encouraged the Mandali to carry on with their mission based on their core principles of spreading traditional values inherent in the scriptures, especially *The Ramayana*. Music and dance were another facet of the Mandali's activities."

A few of the Mandali specials this year:

Carnatic vocals by Ranjani Vasuki with students Tanmay and Vismay (April 15)
Young Gnanesha of reality music show fame to take up Devaranama (April 17)
Carnatic vocals by G Ravikiran (April 18)
Veena recital by Charulatha Chandrashekhar (April 19)
Rama Pattabhisheka (April 20)
Rathotsava and Veeragase by Mysore Naveen & party (April 20)

SK Gopalakrishna, current President of Jayarama Seva Mandali, says, "In the first year of the hall's inauguration in 1965, it was GV's efforts that helped us hold a 15-day discourse on *The Ramayana*. In the years that followed, we started our publications unit, bringing music, culture and books, under one umbrella. Nearly two dozen titles have been published by the Mandali since then, including GV's magnum opus *Srirama Sambhava* which was reprinted for our 50th year celebrations."

The latest addition to the Mandali's bookshelves has been the *Srimad Ramayana Chitramanjari,* a colour illustrated version of *The Ramayana*, in English, Kannada and Sanskrit.

Stellar lineup

The Mandali also conducts a youth talent series every year, apart from their regular programme schedule during Ramanavami. This year's festival began on April 6 and will continue till April 21.

"Sabhas like these play a great role in taking Carnatic music to one and all," says vocalist Ravikiran, adding, "I will perform compositions of Tyagaraja, Dikshitar and Purandaradasa, at this year's celebrations. Tyagaraja had a remarkable approach to music – he saw the gods as an embodiment of *naada*. One of his kritis describes the seven musical notes as bells, and the exalted rāga as a bow."

Ranjani Vasuki, student and daughter of Nagavalli Nagaraj, says she counts it a blessing to be part of the 60th anniversary event with her children. Her concert, she says, will be a vibrant blend of traditional and popular Carnatic compositions with improvisational elements.

"Alongside core Carnatic pieces, I will be including bhajans and a few timeless classic film hits that evoke the spirit and glory of Lord Rama." Ranjani's devotional thread will include keertanas, bhajans and soul-stirring compositions from Purandarasasa with ragas such as *Kadanakuthuhalam, Abheri, Hindola*, and a *Mishra Thumri raga* as well as *Ragamalikas*.

The Sri Ramotsava hosted by Sri Jayarama Seve Mandali, Jayanagar 8th block, will go on till April 21. Entry free. All concerts begin at 6.30pm. Call 080 22445232 for programme details

CITYBEATS

Rise to the occasion

ONGOING

This one is for fans of artisanal and sourdough breads. Suchali's Artisan Bakehouse (SAB) has a new outlet in ITPL, Whitefield. They are known for their selection of handcrafted sourdoughs, said to be naturally leavened using time-honoured fermentation methods.

Fresh bakes from Suchali's Artisan Bakehouse are available on Blinkit and Zepto.

Mango mania

ONGOING

Naturals Ice Cream has launched their mango flavoured ice cream for the summer. This range is made using alphonso mangoes from Ratnagiri that are blended with milk and sugar. This range comes in family packs, mini tubs and shakes, and will be available for a limited time.

Available across all Naturals outlets across India, Swiggy and Zomato.

Catch the beat

APRIL 19

Globetrotting musician Denis Stern with deep roots in flamenco, jazz, Latin, gypsy, and Middle Eastern traditions, will be accompanied by Manu Krishnan on the drums, bassist Siddhartha Ramanathan and vocalist Sreeja Nayek, as he performs in Bengaluru this weekend.

At Windmills, Whitefield, 9.30pm onwards. Ticket details on windmills-india.com

Spotlight on the theatre of food

Elaborate intentions A meal at Crackle is an experience. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Anagha Maareesha

I walk up to the maitre d' at the front of the building. She checks our reservations, hands us wristbands and discreetly knocks on the door. Someone quietly opens it from the inside, and we are ushered in. The whole thing feels like an underground party or a speakeasy. We are, however, at Indiranagar's newest restaurant called Crackle Kitchen.

Crackle is a 22-seater restaurant helmed by chef Vivek Salunkhe, who also is the man behind Dofu, Bengaluru's first 'chuka' Chinese restaurant. He digs deep into his personal experiences and nostalgia with Crackle. The restaurant concept borrows from the omakase style. Omakase means "I'll leave it up to you" in Japanese, and it means that what you are served is left up to the chef.

There is no menu. Based on the day's produce, the team prepares a menu with appetisers – six vegetarian and non-vegetarian each, and a selection of mains. Dessert is served home style aka they make a big batch and every guest is served a portion.

The cocktail menu has been created by Avinash Kapoli (of Soka and Jamming Goat).

Act one

There is a wood fire burning in the open kitchen and

EATING OUT

we take a seat right opposite it. The chefs in the kitchen talk to us as they do prep work. First we are introduced to the day's produce.

Today, there are fresh mussels, *naati* eggs, white pomfret, rib eye steak, lion's mane mushrooms and lobster.

The amuse bouche is called gaiety galaxy. Inspired by the Galaxy Theatre in Mumbai, it has a corn shell filled with sweet corn, fresh popcorn and truffle souffle. The flavours tell me we are off to a great start.

Between the two of us we try twelve appetisers. The *anda bhurji* is brought to the table deconstructed - an egg, a piping hot cast iron pan, bowls of fish roe and house made mayo. You crack the egg into the pan and watch it cook. With the roe and the mayo, this *bhurji* is unique.

Zunkha bhakar is their

Hits: Gardan ki tehri
Misses: Anda bhurji
Cost for two: ₹6,000+

take on the Maharashtrian dish. A rice flour tortilla topped with a chickpea flour custard, *baingan bharta* and goat's cheese.

The chickpea is smooth, the *baigan* is smokey and the cheese is creamy, a delightful combination.

The kodi ghee roast, a recipe of Salunkhe's grandmother, is *naati* chicken soup with ghee roast spices. The flavours in this are a stand out.

I enjoy all the starters, but six is one too many. Yet tempted by the dishes on the menu, we continue.

Act two

Somewhere in the middle of the starters, we were asked to pick a main course.

The options included a *methi malai* cannelloni (made with fenugreek leaves and ricotta), a Bangkok paplet (white pomfret roulade with a nam prik sauce), and the 'not a million-dollar steak' (ribeye steak, albeit priced at ₹2,895).

We opt for two mains; a mistake because the portion sizes are huge.

I have the kimchi *masala bhaat*, while my companion has the *gardan ki tehri*. The former is a comforting risotto topped with a charred eggplant. Creamy and spicy at the same time. The *tehri* is a rice dish from North India, here made with arborio rice. It is topped with slow cooked lamb neck (the *gardan*). The lamb is succulent and the spices in the dish take it a notch above. The portion sizes are such that the dish can easily be shared by two or three.

Final curtain

After 90 minutes of feasting, it is now time for dessert of the day which is Bangalore kappi tiramisu, made with Philadelphia cream cheese, lady finger biscuits, and filter coffee. The dish skews to the bitter side but is light and airy. A welcome feeling after the meal.

I would prefer four, rather than six appetisers, and maybe reduced portion sizes on the mains.

But Crackle gets full points for creativity and innovation of local and global influences.

Mains are a la carte. Open only for dinner in two slots - 7 pm and 9 pm. At Indiranagar. Call 6366072812

A creative churning of music and movement

Shilpa Anandraj

Jagadananda Karaka, Endaro Mahanubhavulu or *KaniKontini* – may sound familiar to any classical dance or music patron. These are some of the most used works of one of the greatest poets, Tyagaraja, in Indian classical music and dance, who is also identified with the Bhakti movement. To celebrate the legacy of Tyagaraja and the relevance of his works today, Bengaluru-based Kuchipudi dancer, Srividya Anagara Sinha, will present her dance production, *Manomanthana,* which means the 'churning of one's mind'.

The dance production, Srividya explains, is a thematic production. "Tyagaraja had an incredible range of musical expertise of Carnatic music. He could compose songs on the go. He was driven by his love and devotion for Rama. Tyagaraja was a man who was clear about what he wanted."

He was invited by Serfoji II (King of Thanjavur) to sing in his court, Srividya says. "The king promised the poet gold and riches, but Tyagaraja declined, feeling it would chain his creativity. It takes a lot for someone to take such a call."

The dancer says she was introduced to Tyagaraja one day when she picked a cassette that has reditions of a few compsoitions by Dr Balamurali Krishna. "'Enduku Dayaradu ra', a composition of Tyagaraja, hit me like a hammer. I sat there stunned with the lyrics and angst."

Credit is due to Dr Balamurali Krishna for his beautiful rendition, Srividya says. "The original poet's heart, the angst and the pain laid bare in the lyrics has the power to be carried down the giant cascade of time. I decided I had to bring his works to life through dance."

Manomanthana, Srividya says, was created in 2019, which first presented at the very vigrahams that Tyagaraja would worship at on Tyagaraja Jayanti. The 67-minute dance will feature different songs that she will dance to. "Every song is connected with a short dialogue between each song, that I composed. The dialogue is a thread that weaves the poems as one dance."

Srividya says, the dance talks about the varied bonds we put on ourselves. "This is represented by a seven-foot brass chain, which I dance with on the stage. Tyagaraja says, chanting the name of Rama can lead to liberation."

The dance has some of Tyagaraja's works where he asks god why he did not come to his rescue when he needed him the most. "It talks about the first death (of ignorance) and awakening from this state with awareness or enlightenment. There are many spiritual and personal layers to his works, which made it tough for me to pick and choose what I wanted to work with."

Manomanthana will be presented on April 15, at BIC, 7pm. Open to all.

A classical act Srividya Anagara Sinha. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Loco pilot not denied leave, says Railways; records differ

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Southern Railway has claimed that the privilege leave sought by loco pilot Bibin Thomas of Mangalore depot in Palghat Division for a medical emergency was not denied. However, official records revealed his leave application specifically citing the medical emergency of his wife was indeed rejected.

Citing a report in *The Hindu* on April 12, Southern Railway's Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) M. Senthamil Selvan said Mr. Thomas had applied for five days' leave citing "personal reasons" and his request was declined by the Chief Crew Controller.

On April 8, Mr. Thomas sent an emergency message to the Crew Controller "verbally without specifying any details and left the headquarters without formal approval," the CPRO said. He was then marked absent. On April 12, Mr. Thomas submitted a manual leave application, stating that his wife was hospitalised for pregnancy-related reasons and the CCRC promptly sanctioned the leave.

However, official records revealed the leave application of Mr. Thomas dated April 8 was rejected despite him clearly mentioning that his wife had been admitted to hospital for delivery. In a handwritten letter to the CCRC through proper channel on the same day, he stated that his wife was admitted for a medical emergency.

A.P. govt. cracks the whip on illicit liquor trade along inter-State borders

'Navodayam 2.0' initiative has resulted in seizures, destruction of illegal liquor, and dismantling of brewing units along the borders with Odisha, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka

Illicit liquor seized from the areas along the Andhra Pradesh-Odisha border during raids by the Excise Department recently.

Sambasiva Rao M.
AMARAVATI

The State government has intensified crackdown targeting smuggling and brewing operations along its borders with Odisha, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka.

The coordinated enforcement effort, part of the State's 'Navodayam 2.0' initiative, has resulted in large-scale seizures, destruction of illegal liquor, and the dismantling of several brewing setups.

Under the directive of Principal Secretary Mukesh Kumar Meena, the Prohibition & Excise Department deployed 381 officers–228 from Andhra Pradesh and 153 from the neighbouring States–to execute the raids across the border districts.

Commissioner Nishant Kumar and Enforcement Director Rahul Dev Sharma led the operations.

Mr. Nishant Kumar on Monday said that the officials destroyed over 49,000 litres of fermented jaggery wash and seized more than 2,000 litres of illicit distilled (ID) liquor in Srikakulam and Parvathipuram-Manyam districts bordering Odisha. In ASR district bordering Telangana, 25,300 litres of fermented jaggery wash was destroyed during raids at Gunduvari Gudem and Pichhukulapadu.

Meanwhile, preventive operations in Chittoor along the Tamil Nadu border led to the dismantling of 50 brewery units, although no production activities were found.

In Anantapur and Sri Satya Sai districts near the Karnataka border, enforcement teams booked 11 cases, destroyed over 1,600 litres of fermented jaggery wash, and arrested several individuals involved in the illegal trade.

Commissioner Nishant Kumar emphasised the importance of cross-border collaboration and praised the participation of the Central forces such as the CRPF in Telangana's Left-Wing Extremism (LWE) zones.

Enforcement Director Rahul Dev Sharma affirmed that operations under the Navodayam 2.0 would continue with more intensity to dismantle the liquor networks.

The crackdown marks a decisive step in curbing cross-border liquor smuggling and has set a precedent for multi-State enforcement cooperation, they observed.

Murdered 5-year-old likely sexually abused

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI

A day after a five-year-old girl was murdered in Karnataka's Hubballi, her family conducted her funeral rites after receiving the body following a post-mortem on Monday. Her alleged killer – a man from Bihar – was shot by the police on Sunday.

Ritesh Kumar, accused of killing the child, was shot in the leg and back after he allegedly attacked the police. He was declared brought dead by hospital authorities.

According to reliable sources, the girl is suspected to have been sexually assaulted. The accused was reportedly under the influence of drugs when the crime was committed. However, the police have said they will comment only after the post-mortem report is received.

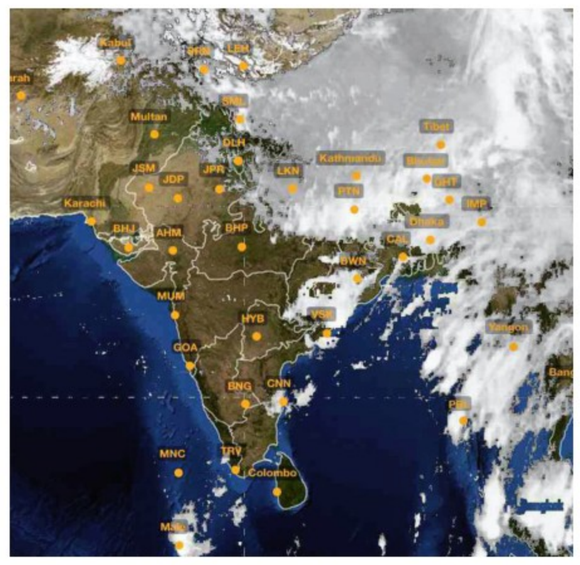
He was subsequently declared brought dead by the hospital authorities.

Meanwhile, according to reliable sources, the girl is said to have been sexually assaulted. And, the accused is said to have been under the influence of drugs when the crime was committed.

Police Commissioner N. Shashikumar told presspersons on Monday that he will comment on the issue only after the receipt of the post-mortem report of the victim and the accused.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Tuesday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Odisha. Thundersquall accompanied with lightning, gusty winds, hailstorm at isolated places over Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar,Assam and Meghalaya. Heat wave likely in isolated pockets over Rajasthan and Gujarat.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	36.6	23.8	Kozhikode	—	36.0	27.0
Ahmedabad	—	42.9	26.5	Kurnool	—	40.5	26.2
Aizawl	—	34.7	18.8	Lucknow	—	35.1	20.0
Allahabad	—	34.8	19.5	Madurai	—	37.1	27.1
Bengaluru	—	34.1	21.9	Mangaluru	—	33.7	25.4
Bhopal	—	39.5	22.4	Mumbai	—	34.2	25.5
Bhubaneswar	0.2	35.2	23.8	Mysuru	—	34.1	22.0
Chandigarh	—	36.0	20.0	New Delhi	—	36.4	20.2
Chennai	—	34.8	28.7	Patna	—	34.2	23.7
Coimbatore	—	36.8	24.2	Port Blair	5.0	32.0	25.0
Dehradun	—	32.4	17.5	Puducherry	—	34.7	27.8
Gangtok	4.0	22.6	12.3	Pune	—	38.9	22.8
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	37.6	25.2
Guwahati	5.0	33.5	20.0	Ranchi	—	33.8	19.5
Hubballi	—	40.0	22.0	Shillong	2.1	24.2	14.8
Hyderabad	—	37.8	25.6	Shimla	—	26.4	16.2
Imphal	—	33.0	18.0	Srinagar	—	29.0	10.0
Jaipur	—	37.6	25.8	Thiruvananthapuram	—	34.0	27.0
Kochi	0.2	32.6	26.4	Tiruchi	0.3	37.7	26.6
Kohima	–	24.2	14.7	Vijayawada	—	36.8	23.2
Kolkata	—	34.7	27.4	Visakhapatnam	—	36.3	28.1

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.19	.47	35	67	120	
Bengaluru	.26	.8	43	53	78	
Chennai	.6	.6	30	70	96	
Delhi	.13	.67	14	166	187	
Hyderabad	.6	.27	23	366	—	
Kolkata	.10	.41	21	86	91	
Lucknow	.7	.38	27	70	121	
Mumbai	.7	.24	22	60	140	
Pune	.5	.13	13	24	47	
Visakhapatnam	.10	.38	16	52	73	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Gurugram, Haryana, recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 314 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Rupnagar, Punjab, recorded a healthy AQI score of 14

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Bengaluru sexual assault case: Accused traced to Kozhikode

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The accused in the Sadduguntepalya sexual assault case had planned to settle down in a remote village on the outskirts of Kozhikode with his live-in partner, a Home Guard working at Bellandur police station, but the South East Division police finally tracked him down and arrested him on Sunday, officials said.

The accused Santosh Daniel, 29, was living with his partner in Whitefield.

The police said he had told them that he was drunk and saw the victim walking with her female friend back to the paying guest accommodation early in the day. The duo had gone to have tea and were returning to their PG when the accused stalked them and sexually assaulted them before fleeing the spot.

He then tampered with the registration number plate of the scooter he used and changed his clothes, said the police. But a clue about his shoe and analysis of CCTV footage led the police to locate him at his workplace in Whitefield before ascertaining his identity.

A police team of 70, headed by DCP South East Division Sarah Fathima analysed footage from over 600 CCTVs and zeroed in on Tamil Nadu and Kerala before nailing the accused down in a village near Kozhikode after 10 days.

Meanwhile, a section of media aired the leaked photograph of the accused, causing his friends to alert him. He consulted a city-based advocate who advised him to leavetown city and escape to remote area in the village, said the police.

The accused convinced his live-in partner to accompany him and she agreed to quit her job and join him. She was separated from her husband and was living with the accused in a rented house in Whitefield, the police said.

Even though it was a non-bailable case, the police produced the accused before the magistrate and took him into six days custody. "The accused seems to be a habitual offender and we suspect that he might have been involved in similar offences before which will soon be proved," the police said.

The Home Guard was remanded to the State Home for Women and will be questioned later to ascertain her involvement.

Waiting game

Ban time: Fishermen pulling their boat to the shore near Ongole as the fishing ban takes effect in Andhra Pradesh from Tuesday. The earlier YSRCP government had given ₹10,000 to each fisherman during the ban. In 2024, due to the election code, the payment was not made, and the new NDA government had announced to double the amount to ₹20,000, but the aid was not provided last year. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

St. Mary's basilica in Kochi remains closed

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The St. Mary's Cathedral Basilica in the heart of Kerala's Kochi remains closed for another Holy Week and Easter celebrations as the stand-off between a rebel group of lay people and priests in Ernakulam-Angamaly Archdiocese, and the official hierarchy continues.

The rebels have dug their heels in against the Synod of Bishops of the Church and opposed any action to what they claimed was an "imposition" of unified mass over the Archdiocese. They support a mass in which the priest faces the people for the entire duration, a tradition which they say is more than half-a-century old.

More travellers from Karnataka opt for beaches, hill stations this summer

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

Travellers from Karnataka are looking to beat the heat this summer by visiting cooler hill stations and playing on beaches as schools close for summer vacations and families are all set to depart for their annual vacations.

The State's inbound travel is also seeing a boom as those seeking cultural tourism, along with some fun are seeking the State's coastal towns.

Udupi and Dakshina Kannada districts have seen a steady flow of tourists along with religious sites like Kollur, Sigandur, Dharmasthala and Kukke Subramanya. The officials of the Tourism Department said that most of the properties in coastal towns are running at an almost 100% occupancy this season.

Officials of the Tourism Department say that most of the properties in coastal towns are running at almost 100% occupancy this season. FILE PHOTO

"In Karwar, which is usually not as popular as other coastal destinations, there is almost no empty room throughout this month. Sometimes, people hesitate to travel in heat, but this time, the summer season has not proved to be a hindrance for tourism in Karnataka," said a senior official from the Department.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC)'s hill station packages are in great demand for the next two months. The Kodaikanal - Munnar package has had the highest demand, followed by the Ooty-Coonoor-Wayanad, Bengaluru-Wayanad and Mysuru- Ooty- Kodaikanal packages.

The trend of families travelling to Southeast Asian countries for slightly longer vacations is continuing this season too with visa protocols being relaxed in many of these countries.

"This year, international travel among Karnataka residents–especially from Bengaluru and Mangaluru has significantly increased compared to last year. The Middle East continues to be a top choice, with Mangalore driving a sharp uptick in outbound travel to the region. Meanwhile, destinations like Japan, Vietnam, and Hong Kong are emerging as favourites for Bengaluru-based travellers," said Tavleen Bhatia, Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer, Cleartrip.

Both the officials of the Tourism Department and private tour operators said that while tourism was initially only slightly affected after the untoward incident in Hampi where two women were allegedly raped, and one man died, it quickly recovered after the government announced various measures for the safety of travellers.

"Almost all hotels are booked in Hampi, according to the information we have received. The number of bike travellers to Hampi has also gone up. We are trying to encourage people to also visit Aihole, Pattadakallu, and Badami (only around 120 kilometres away) while visiting Hampi. We want to promote those destinations more," the senior official from Tourism Department said.

He added that the department is planning to encourage people to travel more, even during off season,s and explore non-popular destinations to prevent congestion and crowding at popular destinations in seasons.

With Goa receiving a lot of flak for the way tourists were allegedly treated in 2024, Karnataka's coastal towns have been the natural next choice for many families.

"With Goa witnessing a year-on-year drop of 15% in flight bookings and over 20% in hotel bookings, coastal destinations in Karnataka–such as Gokarna, Udupi, and Karwar–are seeing increased interest. Interestingly, travel interest in Karnataka's beach towns is up by 10% in 2025 compared to 2024, signaling a preference for more serene and culturally rich coastal experiences," said Ms. Bhatia.

A source in the Tourism Department also said that while Goa is trying to get rid of the negative perceptions, in travel fairs and such events, the officials and tour operators from there are promoting Goa-Karnataka packages.

"Their coastline is 120 kilometres while ours is 320 kilometres. Their tourist destinations are mostly beaches and churches, while we offer a much more diverse experience. They are offering Hampi, Badami, and Pattadakallu with Goa. If the entry point in a package is Goa airport, the exit point will be the Kempegowda International Airport I," the source said.

Missing the target

Despite missing the growth target, the economy remains strong

India's industrial production growth slowed to a six-month low in February to 2.9%, down from January's 5.2% (revised estimates) and almost halved from last February's 5.6%. This decline was broad-based, except for a marginal rise in power production of 3.6%, up from January's 3.4%, but less than half of last February's 7.6%. While mining witnessed the steepest decline to 1.6% this February, from 8.1% last year, manufacturing almost halved to 2.9%, from 4.9% last year. From a use-based classification, the steep decline in consumer durables output to 3.8%, from 12.6% last February as well as a production contraction for the third month in a row, of consumer non-durables by 2.1% (there was a 3.2% contraction in January), indicates a marked decline in overall consumption demand. This has been despite a sharp dip in retail inflation, which was down to 3.61% this February from 5.09% a year ago, with a low food inflation rate at 3.75%, the lowest in two years. This makes it almost certain that the government's wish for a Maha Kumbh-led spike in consumption has not materialised, leading to the likelihood of the Centre's 6.5% GDP growth target for the 2025 fiscal being missed. February's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) numbers co-relate with the 14-month low in the manufacturing Purchasing Manager's Index survey conducted by S&P at 56.3.

This highlights two things: the trepidation of manufacturers facing unprecedented global economic uncertainty following U.S. President Donald Trump's actions and the lack of an appetite among consumers, many of whom have witnessed the value of their assets plummet due to Indian stock market volatility that has mirrored the peaks and troughs in global exchanges. There have been green shoots, however. Within the manufacturing sector, which has the highest weightage of about 77% in the IIP, 14 of 23 industry groups recorded growth this February from a year ago. Growth was led by motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers (8.9%), non-metallic mineral products (8%) and basic metals (5.8%). Capital goods output accelerated to 8.2% from 1.7% last year, indicating robust investment demand aided by a massive rise in government spending. This was despite the liquidity squeeze in India's banking system by ₹1.7 trillion, as on February 20, due to the massive flight of foreign capital in search of haven asset classes and to hedge against a depreciating rupee. The central bank stepped in by injecting about ₹2.18 trillion into the banking system using rupee/dollar swap arrangements that ended on March 24. The Centre can perhaps take solace in the fact that despite a possibility of its growth target for the last fiscal being missed, India remains the fastest growing economy.

Unnecessary change

Amending the RTI Act through the Data Protection Bill is unwarranted

That the Right to Information Act and the use of RTIs have enhanced the accountability of those in governance in India goes without saying. In the last few years there have been attempts to dilute the provisions of the Act, a landmark one that was passed 20 years ago. Clearly, some in governance and administration have treated the Act and its provisions on transparency and disclosure to be encumbrances. A significant threat has now emerged in the amendment to Section 8(1)(j) of the Act, which has been introduced in Section 44(3) of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023. The Act itself is an outcome of *K.S. Puttaswamy* (2017), a judgment that upheld the right of privacy as a fundamental right under Article 21 of the Constitution. Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act allows government bodies to withhold "information which relates to public information" provided its disclosure is not related to public interest or results in an unnecessary invasion of privacy. While doing so, it provides the safeguard that if the Public Information Officer or an appellate authority finds public interest in disclosing such information, it could still be available. This safeguard is important. Some information related to public servants, such as college degrees or caste certificates, might be private, but as a recent and controversial case of a bureaucrat using a fake caste certificate showed, such information could be released in public interest. Section 44(3) of the DPDP act amends Section 8(1)(j) by allowing government bodies to simply withhold "personal information" without the safeguard provisions on public interest or other such exceptions.

In a letter to Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting, Ashwini Vaishnaw defended the amendment, saying that Section 44(3) was aimed at preventing the RTI Act's "misuse" and was to harmonise the requirement of right to privacy and the right to information. He also said that information such as salaries of public officials would still remain accessible through Section 3 of the DPDP Act. But by amending the RTI Act itself – an outcome that was never the intention of *K.S. Puttaswamy* – and by defining "personal information" vaguely in Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act, authorities could deny RTI requests of previously public data by classifying them as "personal" – and lessen public scrutiny. The RTI Act already harmonises concerns related to the right to information and privacy by subjecting them to the question of public interest. Therefore, the amendment using the DPDP Act is unnecessary and unwarranted. The government must take the concerns of civil society and transparency activists and remove the provision amending the RTI Act, in the DPDP Act.

History as battlefield — the perils of reversing the past

K. Kannan

is Senior Counsel/mediator and a former judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court

In March 2025, a wave of textbook revisions such as omitting or vilifying figures like Babur and Aurangzeb while glorifying select native rulers, coincided with rising public anger demanding the renaming or even destruction of Mughal tombs. There were viral campaigns that called for vandalising historical monuments, driven by narratives that paint centuries of India's past in black and white. While advocates claim that such moves correct colonial or biased portrayals, the selective rewriting of history often fuels polarisation, not clarity. When history becomes a battleground for ideology rather than a source of reflection, it can fracture society and foster hatred instead of understanding.

The discipline of history demands a careful and nuanced discernment of the past. It is not merely a recollection of events but a study of causes, consequences and context. However, when history is weaponised in the form of revisionism, especially with an intent to restore a perceived lost glory or correct historical wrongs by reverting to a "status quo ante", it ceases to be a guide for the present and becomes a tool for division.

Such revisionist exercises are not only dangerous but have been the root of conflicts, wars and prolonged suffering across different parts of the world. The grundnorm of this discussion is that while historical wrongs must be remembered to avoid their repetition, they must not be interpreted as mandates to reclaim past statuses or boundaries. Much of the chaos in today's world arises not because we forget history but because we seek to relive or reverse it.

Revisionism versus reckoning

It is important to distinguish revisionist history from historical reinterpretation. Reinterpretation is a legitimate academic exercise, where new evidence or perspectives reshape our understanding of the past. Revisionist history, however, especially in the political sense, seeks to reinterpret the past to justify present-day political agendas, often tied to nationalism, identity politics, or territorial claims. This has been evident in various religious and political conflicts, such as the Crusades, which were themselves sparked by the belief in the sanctity of Christian control over Jerusalem. The First Crusade (1096-1099) was launched ostensibly to reclaim the Holy Land from Muslim rule, despite the region's diverse religious history. What followed were centuries of bloodshed, occupation, and retaliatory campaigns, none of which restored any meaningful peace but, instead, deepened divisions between civilisations. It is a classic example of trying to correct a perceived historical wrong through a violent reversal – not reconciliation.

What is dangerous is a revisionist exercise in history, which is being tied to nationalism, identity politics or territorial claims

The European Wars of Religion in the 16th and 17th centuries, such as the Thirty Years' War, further demonstrate the dangers of historical grievances being revived under the banner of religious or political legitimacy. The Protestant Reformation challenged centuries of Catholic dominance in Europe, leading to a brutal struggle to "restore" previous religious hegemonies. The outcome was catastrophic: millions perished, economies were ruined, and societies were devastated. Here again, the danger was not in recognising the grievances of the past but in weaponising them to reshape the present based on historical constructs. Rather than moving forward with mutual tolerance and understanding, European States plunged backward into a cycle of vengeance, each side justifying their acts through selective memories of the past.

Twentieth century examples

Perhaps the most infamous example of dangerous revisionism is Nazi Germany. Adolf Hitler's ideology rested heavily on the notion of reclaiming the glory of the German Reich and correcting the "humiliation" of the Treaty of Versailles. His rhetoric about the Aryan past, the "stab in the back" theory, and a need for Lebensraum (living space) were all rooted in a highly manipulated version of history. The attempt to reverse the outcome of the First World War by restoring German supremacy led to the Second World War and the Holocaust – a catastrophic result of trying to reengineer history through conquest and genocide.

Similarly, the Partition of India in 1947 was marked by competing historical narratives – Hindu and Muslim nationalists invoked centuries of grievances under previous rulers. What should have been a peaceful transition into two sovereign States turned into one of the worst episodes of communal violence in history, killing over a million and displacing more than 10 million. The violence was not about the future; it was about reclaiming identities and rights rooted in selective versions of the past.

In the contemporary world, Israel-Palestine remains a deeply complex and tragic case of historical grievances clashing with present-day geopolitics. Both Israelis and Palestinians stake claims based on history – often diverging, irreconcilable, and deeply emotional. Efforts to reverse history, whether through settlements, territorial claims, or denial of nationhood, have prolonged a conflict that cannot be resolved by appealing solely to the past.

In Eastern Europe, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022 was partly justified by revisionist arguments about the historical unity of the Russian and Ukrainian people and the invalidity of Ukraine's post-Soviet independence. This attempt to undo post-Cold War borders in the name of historical continuity has led to massive human suffering, economic crises, and a destabilisation of the entire region.

History as a teacher

History should be a teacher, and not a template. The purpose of understanding past wrongs is to ensure they are never repeated – not to demand restitution through acts that recreate the very conflict that they seek to avenge. The obsession with returning to a perceived golden past blinds nations and people to the opportunities of the present and the possibilities of the future. As philosopher George Santayana aptly put it: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." But equally dangerous are those who remember the past only to relive it, seeking justice through reversal, not reconciliation. The greatest service we can do to history is not to rewrite it, but to learn from it – with humility, not hubris.

What a post-Assad Syria means for China

Kabir Taneja

is Deputy Director and Fellow, Strategic Studies Programme, Observer Research Foundation

Over the past two years, China's foreign policy has been consistent in the manner of largely supporting the Arab positions over Gaza, which included hosting Hamas in Beijing, amongst other Palestinian entities, to try and mediate. Its position in Arab hearts and minds has grown and recent surveys have put the United States below its eastern competition in popularity. However, the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria has opened a core security crisis for the Chinese by way of a stronger political position for Uyghur militants in the 'new' Damascus under President Ahmed al-Sharaa.

Getting a safe space

As in multiple reports, Uyghur militants belonging to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) – also known as the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) – have scored prominent positions in the revised Syrian army. Ahmed al-Sharaa took over in a largely unchallenged juggernaut when his group, the Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), arrived in the Syrian capital without any major battles. The HTS has been at the centre of the anti-Assad movement since the initial stages of the Arab Spring led by Al Sharaa (better known then as Abu Mohammed al Jolani, and his cohort of fighters from across the world). This was a time when Syria was a hotspot of global jihadist movements and the so-called Islamic State (IS) controlled large swathes of territory across the Levant region.

Al Sharaa, who has had stints with the IS and al Qaeda, developed his own support base over time. The HTS also offered safe space for those who were seeking shelter or ideological patronage. Here, Uyghurs militias found the opportunity to construct their own sanctuary while offering tactical backing to the HTS. During the period beginning 2011, Uyghur militias were intricately woven into IS ecosystems. Propaganda videos and publications featuring Uyghur fighters were actively promoted – these ranged from well produced videos of Uyghur fighters taking on Assad's military to ideological propaganda translated into the Uyghur language in audio and text formats. More recently, in 2017, the IS released a targeted video showing Uyghur fighters in training and threatening 'rivers of blood' against the Chinese state. In the immediate past, China has seldom featured in IS propaganda as the Washington-Beijing contestation has taken centre stage.

A new Syria, where a military and polity are being rebuilt, has renewed security concerns for China

Fast forward to 2025, and Syria's military and polity are being rebuilt. The first is arguably a more delicate endeavour than the second, with bringing a wide variety of warring factions to rally behind one leader being easier said than done. In Syria's 'new' military, those who fought alongside Al Sharaa have been given precedence irrespective of their nationality. The journey, from jihadists to generals for many, has been taking place swiftly since January. One of the biggest representations overall is by the Uyghurs – nearing 2,000 in number by some estimates. At least one of the known 50 high-ranking commander-level appointments is an Uyghur – Abdulaziz Dawood Khodaberdi (known as Zahid), who has been recognised as a former commander of ETIM in Syria.

Impact of big power competition

For Beijing, this elevation opens an automatic fault line with Damascus, with which it has enjoyed friendly relations in the past. One of the core reasons why China rallied behind America's 'war on terror' narrative was to use American hegemony to deliver on its own counter-terror interests. In 2002, the U.S. had classified ETIM as a terror organisation, only to remove it in 2020 based on the argument that no credible evidence of ETIM's existence was available for over a decade and that China was using it as a bogey to clamp down on Uyghurs in its restive Xinjiang province. The advent of big power competition between the U.S. and China has in fact only given militant groups more manoeuvring space globally. Previously, Beijing has made handling of ETIM a top priority in its relations with the new Taliban-led government in Afghanistan. However, most militant groups now in charge of para-states, tend to always first prioritise their support for those who fought with them in the trenches. Soon after the Taliban took charge of Kabul in August 2021, it was reported that the group had relocated Uyghur militants away from Afghanistan's narrow 76-km long border with China in the Badakhshan province. Unlike the Taliban, the new regime in Syria has taken a different approach – elevating the Uyghurs to official ranks.

The western game plan

The Chinese government has raised this issue in the United Nations as western and regional powers alike rush to engage with Al Sharaa. The western engagements in play are to solidify two fronts. First, to place basic security in the embattled state and stem any mass migration. Second, to make sure Russia, Iran, and, by association, China remain in the peripheries and maintain minimal influence. These larger geopolitical aims have allowed now former designated terrorists to metamorphose into statesmen overnight.

The challenge for Chinese diplomacy continues here. One of the main regional powers that is still kinetically and overtly active in Syria is Israel. But both China and Israel have been at odds over China's stance on Gaza and the issue of Palestine. Even on the Arab side, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, amongst others, who have previously given Beijing a pass over Xinjiang, have accepted al Sharaa, thus limiting Beijing's options and forcing a strategic re-think moving forward.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Court and the Governor

The top court of the land may have shown a streak or two of judicial activism in the matter of its judgment on pending Bills. The top court should have restrained itself from going thus far and should have confined itself to take a call on gubernatorial functions. The real issue of a possible misuse of the Governor's office against some States by the mighty Centre has been shadowed by a verdict that goes deep into the sharing of powers between the judiciary and executive.

Dr. D.V.G. Sankara Rao,
Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh

I write this letter as a former Principal Secretary to the Government of Tamil Nadu. It is essential to understand that the Supreme Court's interventions, including the setting of timelines for constitutional authorities, are not to be construed as violations of the office of the President or Governors. Nor do they undermine the principle of separation of powers. Instead, they are measured and constitutionally backed efforts to uphold the spirit of good governance and accountability.

By invoking Article 142, the Court is not overstepping its mandate but exercising its constitutionally vested duty to "do complete justice". It interprets constitutional silences with an aim to promote efficiency, fairness, and timely administration, without diminishing the dignity or authority of any constitutional post.

The judiciary, the executive and the legislature are equal pillars of democracy. The judiciary's role in interpreting the Constitution is precisely to ensure that these pillars operate within their respective bounds, but also in harmony so that the constitutional machinery does not stall or become dysfunctional due to ambiguity or inaction.

In this light, the Supreme Court's guidance enhances, rather than erodes, the functioning of our democracy.

S.S. Jawahar,
Chennai

Tariff battle, the lessons

The ongoing tariff battle that the United States has with China has focused attention on the assembly of some electronics items in India. Recently there were reports of 'tons' of iPhones being airlifted from Indian plants as part of the manufacturer's 'strategy to get around the Trump tariffs' and build up an inventory of iPhones in one of its biggest markets.

Typical of the ongoing tariff mayhem, there is confusion about phones, electronic items and tariff exemptions. This only underscores that the time is ripe for India to strive for a quantum shift from "assembling" to "designing" electronics. We have a long-established base for both engineering and manufacture. The need is to focus on research and development, and skills and local ecosystems to fashion a global innovation hub, and not be stuck with just the factory floor. We need to exploit our acknowledged software prowess with policy agility, industry-academia synergy, and strategic global integration towards a vision of India as a destination for the co-design of embedded software and hardware.

R. Narayanan,
Navi Mumbai

'IT@Elderly'

The Kerala Government has introduced 'digital literacy' programmes for senior citizens, in urban and rural areas and has achieved total 'digital literacy'. With the world becoming digital, everyone should be digitally educated, learning simple tasks such as how to use WhatsApp, make video calls, send messages and pay bills through GPay and other payment tools.

Perhaps the Government of Tamil Nadu could also consider teaching senior citizens how to manage the digital world with arrangements that are similar to the Kerala model. This would also be of much help to senior citizens who can bridge the online divide for various purposes from the comfort of their homes.

Parthasarathy N.,
Chennai

The sorry state of CSK

It is really sad that five-time IPL champion, Chennai Super Kings, seems to be in a state of total disarray in season 2025. The body language of the players suggests that they lack the intent and the zip to play competitive cricket. The yellow army has hugely disappointed its loyal fans, who have stood by them.

R. Sivakumar,
Chennai

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Feminism for polarised times

Ruchi Gupta

Executive Director of the Future of India Foundation

While current debates on delimitation focus on its impact on the federal balance of power, another historic rebalancing is contingent on it – the implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill, 2023. The Bill marked a watershed moment: gender equity moved from the margins of political discourse to its centre. No institution can now afford to dismiss it. Yet, this very mainstreaming has paradoxically made it harder, at times, to engage with the discourse critically.

As a woman, I often find myself on the edges of the feminist discourse. It's not because I'm "not a feminist" in the way some young women say. But I understand that clumsily expressed discomfort. Today's mainstream feminist discourse can feel like a minefield – demanding disclaimers and caveats before one can step in.

Two terrains

There are two distinct terrains when we talk about women's issues. The first is the structural – the way the design of our society can keep women at the margins. The second is the realm of interpersonal relationships. These overlap, but imposing the structural lens too heavily on the personal risks distorting both. It flattens the richness of human relationships, turning every minor conflict into a battle for power – even when the relationship may be undergirded by love, care, and a willingness to negotiate.

It is true that the personal is political, shaped by deeper hierarchies. But interpersonal relationships are often not reducible to oppression or domination. In India, many men labour quietly – denying themselves comfort, enduring difficult work environments – to support their families. That implicit sense of love and duty creates space for give and take. A husband may expect dinner on the table, but also give his monthly earnings to his wife. Men depending on their wives – emotionally and practically – inevitably reshapes the balance in those relationships. These are not straightforward expressions of patriarchy; they are messy, contradictory, deeply human.

Problematic behaviours exist. But they need to be addressed on their own terms – not simply labelled as misogyny or evidence of oppressive intent. After all, social change comes from public protest and policy reform but also from millions of daily negotiations – quiet shifts in family routines, small acts of solidarity, the rethinking of roles within daily lives. Often, the stories of women from marginalised backgrounds who have achieved unexpected successes include unexpected allies, such as a father who insists on sending his daughter to college. These accounts are part of the real story of progress.

Of course, where women's agency is denied forcibly, we need to address that, through societal change and state power. For instance, daughters who are murdered for pursuing love, or the grassroots elected representative who is made her own proxy by her husband. To empower women we must address multiple interlocking factors: economic independence, legal protections, education, social networks, and cultural shifts. To address these structural issues, we must build state capacity to ensure that institutions actually deliver the protections they promise on paper. However, the most effective interventions work at multiple levels simultaneously – the state and society – and are context-sensitive.

Blurring of inequities

The nature of constraints on a financially independent urban woman who is negotiating household responsibilities is not the same as that of a village woman fearing rape as she steps out at night to access a toilet. Yet, too often, feminist discourse collapses these into a single narrative. It moves too seamlessly between the structural and the interpersonal, the privileged and the vulnerable – sometimes masking inequity more than illuminating it.

This blurring of vastly different inequities – some life-threatening, others negotiable – risks alienating people, especially if they themselves feel embattled as many men do. And while that embattlement is sometimes overstated or misdirected, it is not always imagined. A man earning a lower income who goes to work may endure public humiliation. While his wife may be doing unpaid work at home, she may also be insulated from some of those public indignities. These are not arguments against feminism, but calls for a feminism that acknowledges multiple forms of suffering and responsibility.

Writing this may seem like one is being unnecessarily moderate, complicit in patriarchal structures of power. However, this is also a response to the current moment which is rife with antagonism across all fronts. A more compassionate feminism may be tactically right in this moment, to engender support instead of backlash. When feminist discourse recognises the emotional and economic pressures that shape the lives of men, particularly those at the margins, it invites solidarity rather than defensiveness.

Perhaps what we need now is a feminism that can hold complexity not just within its own ranks but across society. One that can confront injustice without antagonism. One that can distinguish between structure and sentiment, between cultural patterns and individual acts. A feminism that can accommodate contradiction without becoming complicit. This is especially because unlike other battles for rights, within the terrain of male-female relationships, there is no way to segregate the personal from the public. Thus if we adopt an antagonistic framework, we will bring the battle home. That may ultimately be necessary in some cases, but it need not be the starting point.

A more compassionate feminism may be tactically right in this moment, to engender support instead of backlash

What Kancha Gachibowli makes visible

The controversy over it shows how sustainability is our collective blind spot

STATE OF PLAY

Navya Jannu

A blind spot is a gap in our field of vision – a space we cannot see. Yet, we rarely notice it. The brain instinctively fills in the blank using cues from the other eye and surrounding context. One eye compensates for the other. But when it comes to how we manage urban land and design our cities, no such compensation exists. Sustainability is our collective blind spot – always present, rarely acknowledged, and patched over with short-term fixes.

The controversy over 400 acres of land in Kancha Gachibowli, Hyderabad, brings this blind spot into sharp relief. At the centre of the dispute are multiple stakeholders: the Telangana government, University of Hyderabad, students, environmental activists, and political parties. Each views the land differently – as resource, sanctuary, asset, or symbol.

That legal title rests with the state is undisputed. What is in dispute is everything else: what the land represents, who it serves, and what its future should be. For the State, auctioning the land is a pragmatic move to generate revenue, employment, and support Hyderabad's growth. Those opposing the auction see it is an act of ecological erasure, a severing of community bonds, and a reflection of how development is pursued without a sustainable vision.

The land in question is not barren; it is ecologically rich. Over time, it has become a biodiversity hotspot, a carbon sink, and acquired hydrological significance. It shelters ancient rock formations, seasonal water bodies, and a range of vulnerable flora and fauna.

In a city where rising temperatures are a lived reality, the cooling function of such spaces is not just ecological – it is essential to urban habitability.

Despite decades of rhetoric around 'sustainable development,' urban land management continues to operate on a short-term horizon. Environmental assessments are cursory, if conducted at all. Communities are often sidelined in the decision-making process. And the idea that some spaces hold value precisely because they are left untouched – that preservation is a form of progress – remains alien to existing urban planning frameworks.

Legally, the government stands on firm ground: the land belongs to the State, affirmed by revenue records and judicial pronouncement. But law's clarity on ownership does not equate to legitimacy in how that ownership is exercised. Applicable legal frameworks offer no substantive guardrails for ecologically responsible land use by the government. The result is a legal vacuum where decisions that shape our cities are made with little accountability to sustainability.

This vacuum reflects a deeper inconsistency in urban policy. On paper, both the National Urban Policy Framework and State-level master plans invoke sustainability, environmental stewardship, and inclusive growth. In practice, these principles rarely survive the test of commercial opportunity. The proposed auction of Kancha Gachibowli is a textbook example.

What makes this moment even more jarring is the response to those protesting it. That students are being silenced, even met with force, is painful. This is a community driven not by gain, but by a shared sense of ecological responsibility. Yet their dissent is trampled by the very institutions meant to protect them. That excavators entered despite protests and continue to clear swathes of greenery is a brutal reminder of how brittle our developmental imagination has become.

In a city saturated with underutilised commercial real estate, this move is not just short-sighted; it is thoughtless. It reflects a mindset that still treats land as commodity, not commons, and ignores the planetary crisis unfolding around us. What Kancha Gachibowli lays bare is not a lapse in legal authority, but a deeper lapse in vision – a kind of Great Derangement that refuses to acknowledge what lies in plain sight. This blind spot is no longer passive; it has become institutionalised. The State, armed with title and administrative machinery, is approaching the land with a transactional mindset rather than one rooted in long-term stewardship. What is needed is not just legality, but leadership shaped by ecological foresight and a commitment to an inclusive, sustainable future for Hyderabad. Land is the optic nerve of our cities – and the 400 acres at Kancha Gachibowli show just how deep our blind spot runs. The question now is whether we have the will – and civic imagination – to see beyond it.

Navya Jannu is an advocate practising at the Supreme Court of India

While the Israel government wants war, most Israelis don't

Surveys suggest Israelis are worried about the impact of war on the economy and want purposeful negotiations

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

When Israel pushed through its contentious Budget last month, Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich said, "This is a war budget and, God willing, it will also be the victory budget." However, widely cited surveys suggest that most Israelis neither want a war nor a 'victory budget'.

The Finance Minister's emphasis on war highlights the tensions in West Asia. Since the attack on Israel by Hamas on October 7, 2023, Israel has launched more than 35,000 attacks in the region. These include at least 18,000 attacks on Palestine and 16,000 attacks on Lebanon **(Table 1)**.

The ceasefire, reached after 15 months of war, ended last month when Israel launched surprise air strikes across Gaza. Over 1,500 people have been killed in Gaza since the ceasefire collapsed.

Survey results suggest that the Israeli government is at loggerheads with the citizens, as a significant share of them support the ceasefire. According to a survey by the Israel Democracy Institute, an independent centre of research and action, nearly 72% of Israelis said in February that the country should continue with the second stage of negotiations with Hamas **(Table 2)**.

In February, at least half of Israelis held that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should accept responsibility for the events of October 7 and resign immediately. Nearly 73% of the respondents said that he should at least accept responsibility **(Table 3)**.

Mr. Netanyahu's declining popularity coincides with Israelis' growing pessimism about their country's affairs. In March, only 38% of the respondents said they were optimistic about "Israel's democratic situation" in the foreseeable future, with over 59% being pessimistic about it **(Table 4)**.

There is also a growing pessimistic view about Israel's economy. In the February survey, before the Budget was passed, only 33% of the respondents were optimistic about the country's economic situation in the foreseeable future; over 63.6% were pessimistic. After the Budget was passed, the share of those pessimistic grew further to 72.7%. In fact, close to 65% opined that the Budget was designed to a greater extent to serve the narrow interests of certain groups **(Table 5)**.

Amir Yaron, the Governor of the Bank of Israel, also criticised the Budget, saying it would not bring down debt levels enough to offset the spending caused by the war. Israel's fiscal deficit widened to 8.2% in 2024, its highest except for the pandemic year of 2020 **(Chart 6)**.

This year, Israel's outlay for the Ministry of Defence is $29.7 billion, the highest in its Budget proposal. It spent $31 billion in its operations with Gaza and Lebanon last year. The latest OECD report on Israel pointed out that military spending has significant downsides, as it competes with other forms of public spending. Israel ranks among the last five nations when OECD countries are ordered based on their non-defence expenditures. Israel's expenditure on health as a share of GDP is only 5%, lower than the OECD average of 7%. Similarly, its expenditure on secondary education per student and social protection is also lower than the OECD average. The figures are for the latest year for which data is available.

Israel's resumption of attacks has also been condemned by countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iran, and Ireland. While the U.S. administration remains an exception, data by the Pew Research Center shows that more Americans have an unfavourable view of Israel now compared to 2022.

State versus people

The data for table 1 and chart 6 were sourced from the ACLED database and the OECD Economic Survey: Israel 2025. The rest of the data are from Israel Democracy Institute's 'Israeli Voice Index' survey conducted in February and March this year

At loggerheads: People take part in a rally against the Israeli government in Tel Aviv, Israel. REUTERS

Table 1: Number of attacks carried out by Israel in select countries since October 7, 2023

Country	2023	2024	2025	Total
Iran		18		18
Lebanon	1,924	13,509	905	16,338
Palestine	3,603	12,487	2,329	18,419
Syria	86	523	188	797
Yemen		20	5	25

Attacks include airstrikes, battles, disruption of weapons, looting property and shelling.

Table 2: What Israelis said in February when asked if Israel should continue with the second stage of negotiations with Hamas

Certainly it should	44.2%
Think it should	28.7%
Think it should not	12.4%
Certainly it should not	8.7%
Don't know	6%

Table 3: Prime Minister Netanyahu has not accepted any responsibility for the events of October 7 and has not resigned. What do you think he should do? (asked in February)

Accept responsibility and resign	47.8%
Accept responsibility, but resign after the end of the war	24.7%
Accept responsibility, not resign	14.6%
Not accept responsibility and not resign	9.7%
Don't know	3.2%

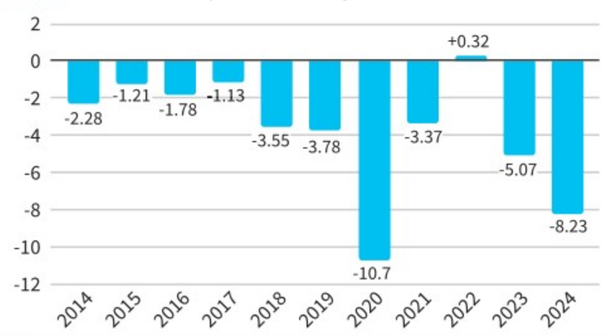
Table 4: What Israelis thought about their country's situation in the following areas in the foreseeable future (asked in February/March)

	Democratic rule	Economic situation	
		Pre-Budget	Post-Budget
Very optimistic	13%	6.5%	6.8%
Quite optimistic	25.2%	26.7%	18.4%
Quite pessimistic	28.4%	38%	34.4%
Very pessimistic	30.9%	25.6%	38.3%
Don't know	2.5%	3.2%	2.1%

Table 5: Which of the following claims about the State Budget that was recently approved is correct? (asked in March)

The Budget is based more on objective, professional economic considerations	22.5%
The Budget is designed to a greater extent to serve the narrow interests of certain groups	65.4%
Don't know	12.1%

Chart 6: Fiscal deficit/surplus recorded by Israel in the last decade



Note: The survey for March was conducted from March 31 to April 6. For February, it was conducted from February 25 to 28

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 15, 1975

Sihanouk's forces enter Phnom Penh

Phnom Penh, April 14: As Khmer Rouge forces thrust into the western and north-western outskirts of Phnom Penh to-day, the city's fall seemed imminent. They burned refugee camps, sending thousands of panic-stricken civilians pouring into the capital. Black clouds from the refugees' burning huts rose over the city.

This morning Khmer Rouge forces advanced towards Pochentong airfield to the west of the City Centre. They overran the city's main radio and tele-communication centre cutting of all communications with the outside world until an emergency transmitter in the city started operating.

Government troops withdrew to the barbed wire perimeter of the airfield.

Meanwhile, an estimated 1,000 Red Khmers slipped into the capital through Government defence lines, poised to attack the airfield.

People living in the residential suburbs of Tuol Kork started to panic and a rush started towards the City Centre. Government military police set up roadblocks to halt them.

Military police used butts of their weapons in a futile attempt to turn back the tide of ox carts, motorbikes and panic-stricken people clogging Route 3 between Phnom Penh and the airport.

The Japanese news agency Kyodo said a Cambodian Air Force T-28 fighter-bomber dropped two bombs on the military command headquarters about noon and flew away to the east.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 15, 1925

The Ceylon Pearl Fishery

"The Times of Ceylon" has the following under date April 6: The Government share of oysters on April 6th was 523,000 and fetched from Rs. 34 to Rs. 36 per 1,000. The Government share of oysters on April 7th was 440,000 and fetched from Rs. 34 to 36 per 1,000; the Cheval Paar was fished on both days. Several divers are leaving.

Last night, 1,400 divers and 86 boats left for Cheval Paar and will return this evening. It has not been decided when the fishery is to be closed. A south-west wind is blowing. The population is daily thinning. The steam-boat service has been disorganised owing to heavy wind. Several cloth merchants are leaving camp. The pearl market is very dull.

From Page One

Violence rocks Bengal's Bhangar over Waqf Act

"There were so many events planned [in the State] over the past 15 days, and all the events and festivals were observed peacefully. The scale of mobilisation on Friday and Saturday [April 11 and 12] was so high and a number of fronts were opened at the same time so it may be possible that police could not reach all places with the same intensity," the ADG said.

Three persons were killed in the violence on April 12 in the violence that erupted in protest of The Waqf (Amendment) Bill. On Monday afternoon, fresh tension erupted at Jafrabad in Murshidabad district particularly after a delegation of CPI(M) leaders led by the party's State Secretary Md. Salim visited the area

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who inaugurated a skywalk to Kalighat temple on Bengali New Year eve, appealed for peace. "Everyone has a right to hold protests but with permission, whoever it is.. There will be provocation but one has to restrain themselves," Ms. Banerjee said.

The Chief Minister also urged that nobody should play vicious games in the name of religion. "When we are born and we die alone, why these riots," she asked. The Chief Minister had earlier said that the Waqf (Amendment) Act will not be implemented in the State and asked the protesters to hold demonstrations against the Centre.

Choksi held in Belgium amid extradition efforts

It was after he alleged that he had been kidnapped and beaten up by "henchmen" working for the Indian government. International agency Interpol had subsequently withdrawn its Red Notice for Mr. Choksi after his lawyers had claimed human rights violations and "political targeting" by the Modi government.

"It goes without saying that we will fight that extradition, we have serious questions about the course of events," Mr. Choksi's Belgian lawyer Simon Bekaert told the newspaper *De Standaard*, adding that he intended to argue that Mr. Choksi would not receive a "fair trial" in India.

Mr. Choksi is currently appealing a decision by the Antiguan government to revoke his citizenship. His nephew Mr. Nirav has also been arrested in the UK on India's request and has been in prison since 2019 as he appeals against his extradition to India.

The Ministry of External Affairs did not comment on the latest development, but Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the arrest of Mr. Choksi was a victory of the government's diplomacy. "It is a matter of pride for India," he told reporters on the sidelines of an event to commemorate the 135th birth anniversary of B.R. Ambedkar.

India has intensified ties with Belgium in the past few years, and both countries signed an extradition treaty in March 2020.
(Inputs from Sandeep Phukan)

Telangana formalises categorisation of SCs

In all, 18 sub-castes of the total 59 which received marginal benefits have been placed under Group-II with 9% reservation while 26 sub-castes that were relatively better placed in terms of opportunities had been placed in Group III with 5% reservation.

Recruitment to government jobs would forthwith be based on the categorisation of the SC communities and the youth from these communities were exhorted to avail the opportunity, he said adding the categorisation would not be applicable to the vacancies already notified.

Loans now cheaper as major banks cut rates

SBI cut its fixed deposit interest rates for senior citizens. Interest rates for FDs (fixed deposits) that mature between one and three years will now be 20 basis points collectively.

FDs with tenure between one and two years will now yield 7.2% from 7.3% and those between two and three-year tenure will now accrue an interest rate of 7.4% from 7.5%, according to SBI' s website, effective April 15, 2025.

Bank of India reduced its FD interest rates for amount of less than ₹3 crore and is now offering 4.25% for deposits maturing between 91 days and 179 days. A rate of 5.75% is given for 180 days to less than one-year deposits. Deposits for one year would get an interest rate of 7.05% while those above 1 year up to 2 years would get 6.75%. For deposits in the bucket of ₹3 crore to less than ₹10 crore, the bank will be offering 5.75% for the funds maturing between 91 days and 179 days, an interest rate of 6.25% is being offered for 180 days to up to 210 days deposit and 6.50% for deposits of 211 days to less than one year, the bank said in a statement.

The cut in deposit and lending interest rates comes days after RBI announced a 25-basis point cut in repo rate, the rate at which commercial banks borrow from the central bank. Repo rate at the beginning of the calendar year was 6.5%. After two consecutive cuts, the rates are now at 6%.

Choksi was arrested from Belgium hospital, had filed 'freedom request'

Fugitive businessman's lawyer in India says plea in Belgium allows investigation to continue without Choksi's custody; he adds that his client has cancer and was kidnapped, tortured in 2021; whistleblower says early extradition remains unlikely

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
MUMBAI

Mehul Choksi was undergoing treatment at a hospital in Belgium when he was picked up by the Belgian authorities, his lawyer told *The Hindu* on Monday.

"He has filed for an appeal or a freedom request. It has pleaded that the probe can continue without the need of him being in the custody. The plea has been moved on the grounds that he is not a flight risk and that he is suffering from medical conditions," his lawyer Vijay Agarwal said.

Asked about the details of his medical conditions, Mr. Agarwal said his client was suffering from cancer. "Also, he was tortured and that he has faced physical deformity because of the torture. He is suffering from traumatic PTFD (Proximal Tibiofibular Fracture and Dislocation) because of the torture he had faced when he was picked up from Antigua to Dominica. He was kidnapped at that time. It is our appeal that India had sent henchmen who tortured him," he said.

Sources close to Mr. Choksi's family confirmed to *The Hindu* that he was nabbed from the hospital where he was allegedly undergoing treatment for blood cancer, or leukaemia. His lawyers are likely to plead that there is little possibility of him getting a fair trial in India.

They also confirmed reports in the Belgian media that quoted Mr. Choksi's local lawyer that he was not just tortured and abused, but was also allegedly tasered in 2021 on a boat from Antigua to Dominica.

Hariprasad S.V., a whistleblower based in Bengaluru who had blown the lid off Mr. Choksi's alleged scam, told *The Hindu* that he was not very hopeful of the early return of the fugitive businessman to India. "If it was possible, it was much more possible to do it in Antigua. It is more difficult to get it in Belgium now. The European laws are stricter for extradition, human rights. It is not very easy," he told *The Hindu* from Bengaluru.

On the run: Mehul Choksi is taken to a police van by a police officer after a court hearing in Roseau, Dominica, in June 2021. AP

"In 2011-12, I had a business deal with Mehul Choksi for a franchise of Gitanjali Lifestyle company. He had assured us that there will be minimum guaranteed returns on investment, that there will be profit sharing on the total sale. The entire operation was to be run by him. He was to give the rent on my property. He was also to give 12% per annum minimum guaranteed return. So, I had invested ₹10 crore then. But I soon realised that it was a Ponzi scheme. By the end of 2013, I had realised that many other people were also trapped by him and that it was a big scam. Since then, I filed complaints, approached the central agencies and pursued this for years," he said.

Mr. Hariprasad said that he did his own investigation against Mr. Choksi and had found that huge amounts of money had been siphoned off from India to abroad.

"He had shown his Indian company as loss-making and his American company as profit-making for the same amount at a time when the Indian market was booming. Who buys diamonds worth crores in the U.S. and not in India," he asked.

Mr. Hariprasad said he had written to the Prime Minister's Office seeking its immediate intervention in probing the alleged scam.

India reached out to Belgium in Choksi case last October

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Indian agencies had initially approached the Belgian authorities for Mehul Choksi's extradition between August and October 2024.

"In July 2024, information was received from the National Central Bureau, Brussels that Mr. Choksi was undergoing some medical treatment in Belgium. Basis that information, several documents related to him were shared with NCB, Brussels. Thereafter, on consultations with the officials of the CBI and Ministry of External Affairs, a precise extradition request dated October 25, 2024, as per the desired model of Belgium authorities, was sent to the Government of Kingdom of Belgium," said a senior official.

The Enforcement Directorate has so far attached assets worth ₹2,566 crore in connection with the investigation against the PNB scam case "mastermind".

Forensic samples can soon be analysed by private labs too: Shah

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that the Ministry is working on an agreement to allow certain samples received by government-owned forensic science laboratories (FSL) to also be analysed by private laboratories.

Amit Shah

Mr. Shah said there is a need for 30,000 trained professionals to visit every scene of crime for which the punishment is more than seven years in prison under the new criminal laws. He noted that each year, 36,000 students will graduate from the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), many of whom will go on to work in private forensic laboratories as well.

The Minister said that due to the farsightedness of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government established he NFSU in 2020, while three new criminal laws came into force in 2024. While seven campuses have been established so far, nine more will be set up in the next six months, he said. Apart from these, the establishment of 10 more campuses is also proposed, he added.

Addressing the All India Forensic Science Summit 2025 organised by the NFSU, he emphasised the need to categorise offenders into habitual criminals, those driven to crime by circumstances, and those who committed crimes out of necessity.

He stressed the importance of providing psychological counselling to such individuals within jails, with the goal of encouraging them to become responsible citizens.

Pashupati Paras's RLJP quits NDA, may join grand alliance in Bihar

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) chief and Ram Vilas Paswan's brother Pashupati Kumar Paras on Monday announced that his party has quit the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) over "injustice" meted out to him and his party.

"I along with my party's five MPs quit the NDA today. I had been with the NDA since 2014 and even won six seats in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls but later the NDA did injustice to us... you media persons know it all," Mr. Paras told *The Hindu* over the phone.

Asked what would be his future political strategy, he said, "We have travelled to 22 districts of the State so far and when we complete visiting all 38 districts, we will mull our next political strategy but we are preparing for contesting all 243 Assembly seats in the State."

Asked whether he would be going with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD)-led Opposition in the polls, he said, "RJD chief Lalu Prasad has been family since long."

Pashupati Paras said the party will mull over its political strategy after visiting all 38 States. ANI

"I remained silent for six to eight months for the sake of the ruling coalition my party was part of, but we were not given proper respect, so now decided to make the final exit, formally," he said.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Paras, who is also facing a family dispute with his estranged nephew and Union Minister Chirag Paswan, paid tributes to B.R. Ambedkar on his birth anniversary at the *Sankalp Sammelan* event in Patna along with party leaders.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the RLJP was not given a single seat to contest under the NDA, but Mr. Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) was allocated five seats and it won all of them. Mr. Paras resigned from the Union Cabinet in March 2024, ahead of the Lok Sabha election.

In 2021, the Lok Janshakti Party, founded by veteran Dalit leader Ram Vilas Paswan split into two factions after his death – Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party headed by Mr. Paras and the Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas).

Mr. Paras parted ways with Mr. Paswan over the latter's rebellion against Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar during the 2020 Assembly election. Mr. Paras also raised the demand for conferring the Bharat Ratna on Ram Vilas Paswan, calling him the "second Ambedkar". He has also been meeting RJD chief Lalu Prasad but chooses to keep his political cards close to his chest, saying he would discuss with his party leaders the political future after completing a tour of the remaining 16 districts.

However, sources close to Mr. Paras told *The Hindu* the party would be contesting the Assembly election as part of RJD-led Opposition alliance. "If *mahagathbandhan* (grand alliance) offers proper respect and suitable position along with a number of seats, the RLJP may consider joining them," said a party leader.

CPI(M) writes to Tripura CM about moving Ram idol

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The CPI(M) has requested Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha to shift an idol of Lord Ram installed in a public space where the statue of a communist leader once stood.

Jitendra Chaudhury, the CPI(M)'s State secretary and Leader of the Opposition, said unknown persons had installed an idol at the Srirampur tri-junction in Unakoti district's Kailashahar town on the night of April 11.

The idol was placed on the pedestal where the statue of former Deputy Chief Minister Baidyanath Majumder was previously installed.

The pedestal had remained vacant since the communist leader's statue was demolished after the BJP came to power in 2018.

Amid 'GPS spoofing' claims, IAF says Myanmar 'missions were achieved' as planned

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A day after sources in the military establishment suggested that the Indian Air Force's transport aircraft carrying relief materials to earthquake-hit Myanmar late last month faced "GPS spoofing", the IAF on Monday said its crew were capable of handling such situations, and "every mission was achieved as planned".

GPS (global positioning system) spoofing can be considered to be a form of cyberattack that includes generating false GPS signals to mislead an aircraft. The false signals result in misleading the navigation equipment, posing a significant risk to the aircraft.

"The possibility of degraded GPS availability was published by the Mandalay International airport as NOTAM and all due precautions were put in place to cater for such conditions," the IAF said in a post on X.

India sent a total of six military transport aircraft to Myanmar with relief materials.

NOTAM or 'Notice to Airmen' is a notice filed with an aviation authority that seeks to alert pilots of an aircraft to potential hazards.

"IAF crew are well capable to handle such unavailability, while ensuring safety of flight and achievement of the designated task or mission. Accordingly, every mission was achieved as planned," the post added.

India sent the first consignment of relief materials to Myanmar on March 29 in a C-130J aircraft and its pilots reported that the plane's GPS signal was tampered with when it was in Myanmar's airspace, sources said on Sunday.

New Delhi sent a total of six military transport aircraft to Myanmar, transporting relief materials, field hospitals and rescue teams, with a majority of them experiencing GPS spoofing, they said.

India had launched 'Operation Brahma' to extend assistance to Myanmar after the country was hit by a major earthquake on March 28.

300 kg drugs worth ₹1,800 crore seized off Gujarat coast

Press Trust of India
AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat ATS said the contraband was sent from the Pasni port in Pakistan

In a joint operation, the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad and the Indian Coast Guard have seized over 300 kg of drugs that was dumped into the Arabian Sea by Pakistani smugglers who fled across the international maritime boundary on being chased, officials said on Monday.

The seized contraband, said to be worth ₹1,800 crore, is suspected to be methamphetamine and has been handed over to the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) for further probe, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) said in a statement.

T.N.-bound

Methamphetamine is a lab-made (synthetic) stimulant also known as "ice" or "crystal meth". It is a highly addictive recreational drug which exhibits powerful euphoric effects.

According to the ATS, the contraband sent from Pakistan's Pasni port was supposed to be moved to another boat mid-sea and then transported to Tamil Nadu.

The ATS and the ICG carried out the joint operation near the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) between India and Pakistan in the Arabian Sea off Gujarat on the intervening night of April 12-13, said the release. The Jakhau coast in Kutch district is the closest point on the Indian mainland to the IMBL.

Congress crushed Constitution to continue in power, says Modi

PM says Opposition party had gone 'against the dream of Babasaheb Ambedkar, who evolved a system for social justice in the Constitution, and back-stabbed him for appeasement'; he says 'biggest example of its ill-conceived policy was Waqf law'

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Remembering a leader: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paying homage to Dr. B R Ambedkar on his 134th birth anniversary at Prerna Sthal in the Parliament House Complex on Monday. ANI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday hit out at the Congress, accusing it of exploiting the "holy Constitution as a weapon to grab power". He slammed the Opposition party for granting reservation in Karnataka on the "basis of religion" and practising "appeasement politics".

"Whenever the Congress saw a threat to remaining in power, it crushed the Constitution. During the Emergency, it crushed the spirit of the Constitution so that it could stay in power," he said while addressing a gathering in Hisar, Haryana after laying the foundation stone of a new terminal at the Maharaja Agrasen airport. He also flagged off a flight to Ayodhya. "Our Constitution provided reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, but the Congress never cared about those benefits reaching these communities."

'Political game'

Mr. Modi said for its "political game", the Congress had gone "against the dream of Babasaheb Ambedkar, who evolved a system for social justice in the Constitution, and back-stabbed him for politics of appeasement".

"In Karnataka, the Congress government has granted reservation in government tenders based on religion, though Babasaheb had asserted there would be no provision for religion-based reservation in the Constitution. They have snatched the rights of SCs, STs and OBCs and given reservation on the basis of religion," he said.

Alleging that the Congress's politics has harmed the Muslim community, Mr. Modi said the party made "a handful of fundamentalists happy" even as the community remained poor and uneducated.

"The biggest example of the Congress's ill-conceived policy is the Waqf law. After the country's Independence, the Waqf law was in place till 2013, but just to win elections and for appeasement, vote-bank politics, the Congress, in the last months of 2013, amended the Waqf law for political gains. The Waqf law was changed in a way that it was placed even above Babasaheb Ambedkar's Constitution. It was the biggest disrespect of Baba Saheb," he said.

Mr. Modi challenged the Congress to appoint a Muslim as the party president. "If in the true sense they have even a little bit of compassion towards Muslims, the Congress should have appointed a Muslim as its president. Why don't they do it?," he asked.

He said that within the party, the Congress did not give anything to the Muslims, but "keep snatching the rights of the country's citizens, which has exposed their intention of not working towards the welfare of anyone.

'Secular code'

Mr. Modi said the Constitution's "spirit and sentiment" indicated that there should be a uniform citizen code for everyone. Terming this the "secular civil code", he said the Congress never implemented it. "In Uttarakhand, after the BJP formed its government, a secular civil code was implemented. But see the misfortune of the country, people carrying the Constitution in their pocket, the people of the Congress, are opposing it."

Mr. Modi said Babasaheb's life, struggles and message had been the cornerstone of his government's 11-year journey. "Every decision, every policy, and every day had been dedicated to his vision," he said.

Modi govt. paid 'lip service' to Ambedkar, did not fulfil his wishes: Congress chief

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Paying respects: Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Mallikarjun Kharge, Sonia Gandhi arrive to pay tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. ANI

Accusing the Narendra Modi government of paying only "lip service" to B.R. Ambedkar's legacy without taking concrete steps to fulfil his wishes, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the Bharatiya Janata Party and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh were "enemies" of the architect of the Constitution.

Hitting out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his attack on the Congress's treatment of Ambedkar, Mr. Kharge cited a letter in which Ambedkar blamed communist leader S.A. Dange and Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar for his defeat in the election of 1952.

Speaking to presspersons on the occasion of Ambedkar's 134th birth anniversary, the Congress president stressed the need for a nation-wide caste census as well as implementation of reservation for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in private educational institutions.

"The Modi government takes the name of Ambedkar but is not ready to fulfil his aspirations and wishes. They only pay lip service," Mr. Kharge said.

He said the timing of the function to offer floral respects at the Ambedkar statue inside Parliament complex had been advanced to suit the Prime Minister's schedule. Though Mr. Modi paid his respects by offering flowers at the statue, he skipped another event inside the Central Hall to pay homage at Babasaheb's portrait, he said.

'Social justice'

He said the Constitution was a gift from Ambedkar to citizens to secure social, economic and political justice.

"We forwarded the ideas of social justice in the [Ahmedabad] AICC [All India Congress Committee] session," Mr. Kharge said.

The Congress leader said that the fundamental guarantee given under Article 15(5), introduced by the Congress on January 20, 2006 to provide reservation to SCs, STs and Other Backward Classes in private educational institutions, must be implemented without delay.

"The Centre is making policies on the basis of the 2011 Census, and nothing is known about the 2021 Census that was supposed to happen. Policies are made on the basis of Census. We demand that along with the general Census, a caste census should be conducted, so as to know how much which section has progressed," he said.

The Congress president also highlighted the need for a Central law for the SCs/STs sub-plan that guaranteed budgetary allocations; removal of the 50% cap on reservations; and implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill immediately with a separate quota for SC, ST and OBC women within it.

Social Justice Minister hails Ambedkar at event, calls him a staunch nationalist

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI

He slams Opposition for 'appropriating' Ambedkar's legacy and referencing him only as a Dalit leader

Commemorating B.R. Ambedkar's 134th birth anniversary, Union Social Justice Minister Virendra Kumar on Monday said the country must never forget that the principal architect of the Constitution was a "staunch nationalist" first, referring to his refusal to accept Christianity or Islam as he sought an emancipatory faith for the Scheduled Castes of India.

Addressing the event at the Bharat Mandapam here, Mr. Kumar spoke of how Dr. Ambedkar refused offers from Christian missionaries and Muslim leaders alike, and embraced Buddhism instead, when he began his search for a new religion.

"His contribution was so monumental. Can you imagine what our country would have been like had he accepted Christianity or Islam? There is no bigger nationalist than Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. Even after all the struggles, oppression, and discrimination that he faced throughout his life, he was at his core a staunch nationalist," Mr. Kumar said.

The Minister went on to cite Veer Savarkar's thoughts on Ambedkar's embrace of Buddhism. "He [Veer Savarkar] had spoken of how his [Ambedkar's] acceptance of Buddhism meant that he was now properly in the Hindu fold," Mr. Kumar said.

During his address, he spoke of how "people of the General Category" had also rallied behind Ambedkar. The Minister addressed an event hosted by the National Commission for Scheduled Castes to celebrate Ambedkar's birth anniversary and the journey of 75 years of the Constitution in India.

During his address, he also took a dig at the Opposition for allegedly appropriating Ambedkar's legacy and referencing him merely as a "Dalit leader".

"He is no less than a God for us and our people," Mr. Kumar said, adding that those who talked about the Constitution today had not done the bare minimum to honour the places that had left a major impact on Ambedkar's life.

Thousands gather at Nagpur, Mumbai to pay homage to Ambedkar on his birth anniversary

Abhinay Deshpande
MUMBAI

In memory of: People lighting candles to pay tribute to B.R. Ambedkar on his birth anniversary in Mumbai on Monday. PTI

Thousands of followers of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar thronged Deekshabhoomi in Nagpur and Chaityabhoomi in Mumbai on Monday to mark the birth anniversary of the principal architect of the Indian Constitution. The day was observed with deep reverence, cultural programmes, and tributes.

In Nagpur, people began arriving from various parts of the country on Sunday evening, with Deekshabhoomi witnessing large crowds from early morning. It was at this historic site in 1956 that Ambedkar embraced Buddhism, initiating a massive socio-religious movement. Followers queued up to offer floral tributes at the stupa and to Ambedkar's preserved ashes.

Members of the Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Smarak Samiti performed a ceremonial tribute at 10 a.m.

Simultaneously, Chaityabhoomi in Mumbai, where Ambedkar was cremated in 1956, also witnessed massive footfall. Located in Dadar, the memorial has become a central site for Ambedkarites who arrive in large numbers every year to pay homage. The Maharashtra government and Mumbai civic authorities had made special arrangements including medical camps, water facilities, and traffic management to handle the influx of visitors.

Long queues of followers waited patiently for hours to pay their respects, while chants of "*Jai Bhim*" echoed through the air. To manage the massive footfall, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Mumbai Police deployed over 1,000 personnel and erected temporary facilities around the site.

"Babasaheb dedicated his life to fighting for our rights," Rajesh Kumar Gautam (42), a security guard originally from Varanasi and now residing in Santacruz, said. "Even the air we breathe freely today is because of his struggles. Yet, his dream remains unfulfilled, especially when we see the current government's priorities, like the expenditure on the Ram Mandir, overshadowing essential sectors like education."

Ayodhya Prasad Sharma, another security guard originally from Uttar Pradesh, shared similar sentiments. "Ambedkar was a guiding light. He taught us the importance of education and showed us the path forward. His teachings are the reason many of us are here today."

For Parbudayal, a civil department worker from Rajasthan now living in Andheri, Ambedkar's impact is closely tied to the legacy of Kanshi Ram, the founder of the Bahujan Samaj Party. "Babasaheb was instrumental in reducing caste discrimination, but Kanshi Ram carried that legacy forward," he said. "Without Kanshi Ram, much of Ambedkar's work might not have reached the grassroots."

On March 30, ahead of Ambedkar Jayanti, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Deekshabhoomi, where he paid respects at the stupa, and said that building a "developed and inclusive Bharat" would be the true tribute to Ambedkar's legacy.

(With inputs from Niranjan Krishna)

On Ambedkar Jayanti, a 40-year-old cry for justice

Purnima Sah
MUMBAI

In limbo: Over 400 residents from the Sheva Koliwada in Maharashtra sat in protest outside the tehsildar's office on Monday. FILE PHOTO

Over 400 residents from Sheva Koliwada village in Uran taluka of Raigad district in Maharashtra sat in protest outside the tehsildar's office on Monday, with a photo of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and a copy of the Constitution placed on a table nearby. They were demanding justice from the State and Central governments, which had promised rehabilitation over 40 years ago after acquiring their lands for a township project, and drew attention to the fact that they have been living in a transit camp ever since.

As part of the protest held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the residents also wrote to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis urging him to look into their grievances. A police officer from the Uran police station said after receiving a positive response from the tehsildar, the residents had withdrawn the protest.

Tehsildar Uddhav Kadam said, "We have accepted their letter of demands regarding their rehabilitation. We have also accepted their representation to the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) regarding shortage of water supply in their area and a letter addressed to the Chief Minister urging him to end their prolonged displacement. Tomorrow, we will submit all the letters to the respective offices."

The residents also demanded answers for the delay in their rehabilitation and sought a Criminal Investigation Department investigation into the reasons for the delay.

Following *The Hindu* report "40 years in a transit camp" dated November 17, 2024 which had highlighted their plight and their decision to boycott the Maharashtra Assembly election, officials from the Election Commission of India and the Raigad District Collectorate had visited the village to convince them to vote.

The issue has its origins in 1984, when the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) township project was coming up. The people of what was then Sheva gaon village, now known as Navi Mumbai, were moved to two transit camps, 12 km away, their current location. The fisherfolk got Boripakhadi village, also called Hanuman or Sheva koliwada; the farmers got Bokadvira village, also called Navin Sheva.

They were promised compensation for the loss of their land and livelihood. Sheva koliwada residents claim they have not been compensated, new homes were never built for them, and they have no proof that they own the land they have lived on for over 40 years now.

Their demands include declaration of the Hanuman Koliwada gram panchayat invalid permanently; probe into the reasons for delay in rehabilitation; reasons for failures in water supply by the MIDC; a detailed probe into the funds issued for the rehabilitation and failure to implement promises; and criminal action against the JNPT officials for delaying the rehabilitation.

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BID Identification No. 01 / E.E. RWSS, Boudh of 2025-26
Letter No.1068 // Dt. 10.04.2025

1.	Nature of Work	:	Building works
2.	Estimated Cost	:	344.23 lakhs
3.	No. of works	:	01 Nos.
4.	Tender Cost	:	10000.00
5.	Class of Contractor	:	"A" Class
6.	Availability of Bid document in the portal	:	Dt.28.04.2025 11.00 hours to 13.05.2025 17.00 hours
7.	Date of seeking clarification	:	During the office hours of 28.04.2025 to 08.05.2025
8.	Last Date & time of receipt of Bids	:	Dt.13.05.2025 at 17.00 hours
9.	Date & time of opening Bids	:	Dt.14.05.2025 at 11.30 hours

Further details can be seen in the bidding documents which is available in the e-procurement portal **https//www.tendersorissa.gov.in** subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in the website Authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

O-42: Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Boudh.
OIPR-25039/11/0006/2425

INBRIEF

Govt. frames draft rules for gas meters to ensure transparency

The Consumer Affairs Ministry has framed draft rules for gas meters under the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011, which make it mandatory for all gas meters used for domestic, commercial, and industrial purposes to undergo testing, verification, and stamping prior to their use in trade and commerce. "The re-verification of these gas meters is also prescribed under the rules to ensure their correctness when these are in use," the Ministry said in a press release on Monday. The Ministry said the primary objective of these new rules was to ensure accuracy, transparency, and reliability in the measurement of gas.

Medical device makers told to submit compliance certificates

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has upgraded its online registration system and has asked all medical device manufacturers to re-submit market standing certificates and non-conviction certificates for registration. The move by CDSCO is aimed at improving ease of doing business and streamlining the regulatory process. The market standing certificate is a document verifying the company's credibility and compliance with regulatory standards. The non-conviction certificate verifies that a medical device manufacturer or importer has not been convicted of offences related to the safety, quality, or performance of their devices.

ASI seeks to shed new light on Dwarka through explorations

A nine-member team of the Underwater Archaeology Wing of the ASI has undertaken onshore and offshore expeditions at Dwarka and Beyt Dwarka to search, document, and study submerged archaeological remains as well as ascertain their age

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

In an effort to shed new light on Dwarka, an important part of India's "cultural history", the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has undertaken a project to ascertain the antiquity of objects recovered during expeditions in Gujarat.

A nine-member team of the Underwater Archaeology Wing of the ASI has undertaken onshore and offshore expeditions at Dwarka and Beyt Dwarka to search, document, and study submerged archaeological remains as well as ascertain the antiquity of the recovered objects through scientific analysis of sediments, archaeological and marine deposits, a senior ASI official said.

Beyt Dwarka, believed to be the home of Lord Krishna, is an island off the coast of Gujarat, where the Dwarkadhish Temple is located.

A five-member team of the ASI had carried out brief fieldwork in February in the south of the Gomati Creek, located on the eastern side of Dwarka. This investigation was aimed at inspecting earlier explored areas and examine their present condition. It also aimed to identify probable areas for further investigations and study. The selected area was explored by archaeologists and important features were photographed.

A member of the ASI's underwater wing during an expedition in Dwarka from 2005 to 2007. FILE PHOTO

"Dwarka is an important place from a historical, archaeological and cultural point of view. Dwarka has always been a matter of research being mentioned in ancient literature. It has remained a significant part of cultural history of India. Considering its importance, Dwarka has been explored and researched by historians and archaeologists in the past as well," Alok Tripathi, Additional Director-General of the ASI, who is leading the excavation, told *The Hindu*.

Important remains

The Underwater Archaeology Wing carried out systematic archaeological investigations from 2005 to 2007 at Dwarka. These investigations, both onshore and offshore, revealed important archaeological remains, including ancient sculptures, stone anchors, and other objects of historical importance.

A large area was scientifically surveyed but underwater archaeological excavations were carried out in a limited area by the archaeologists of the ASI and divers of the Navy. The area for the excavation was duly marked and systematic dives were conducted. During the excavation, scattered submerged remains, which had deposition of vegetation as well as thick calcareous deposit, were cleaned. The excavation revealed clusters of submerged remains.

In 2007, a small area near the northern gate of the Dwarkadhish temple was chosen for the excavation. The entire excavation was conducted meticulously to document antiquity in situ. A deposit of about 10 metres having 26 layers was excavated. Antiquities recovered from this small excavation included iron objects, beads, copper objects, rings, and on. Pottery recovered during the excavation was also examined and studied thoroughly.

The present study is planned to cover an expanded area in Okhamandal city. Teams of archaeologists are looking for other potential sites in the area to understand the history of the site, Professor Tripathi said.

This study would include archaeological explorations, identification of potential sites and places, scientific study involving diving operations, search and collection of archaeological remains, their proper documentation and study, involving scientific analysis and studies.

Salman Khan receives fresh death threat; case booked

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Bollywood superstar Salman Khan has reportedly received another death threat, this time in a WhatsApp message sent to the Mumbai Transport Department, the police said.

The unidentified sender allegedly threatened to either forcibly enter Mr. Khan's residence or detonate a car bomb targeting the actor. The message was received on a WhatsApp number belonging to the Worli Transport Department, prompting immediate police action.

Following the complaint, an FIR was registered at the Worli police station against an unknown person. Authorities have launched an investigation to trace the source of the message.

This is not the first time the actor has been targeted. Last November, Mr. Khan was allegedly threatened by members of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. A message sent to the Mumbai Police traffic control room had demanded an apology at their temple or a ransom of ₹5 crore, failing which the actor would be assassinated.

Earlier, a ₹2 crore ransom had also been demanded from the actor.

Bengal CM's remarks on Waqf Act not right: Meghwal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on Monday said the remarks by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee that the new Waqf Act would not be implemented in the State was "not right".

Noting that she had made a similar remark on the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, Mr. Meghwal said, "But CAA was implemented in West Bengal."

"It [Waqf Act] is a law enacted by Parliament which is implemented pan-India. If there is a difficulty during its implementation, suggestions can be made during framing of rules," the Law Minister said on the sidelines of a function to mark the 135th birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

CPI, YSRCP move top court to challenge constitutional validity of Waqf Act, 2025

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of India (CPI) has joined the queue of petitioners who have moved the Supreme Court to challenge the constitutional validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

The Left party has filed a writ petition through its general secretary D. Raja, in which it has contended that the Waqf (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Centre without proper consideration of the objections raised by the members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee formed to review the Bill, and the other stakeholders.

The plea, filed through advocate Ram Sankar, said the Amendment Act, published on April 5 following the assent of the President of India, substantially curtailed the autonomy of the Waqf Board and fundamentally transformed the framework of the Waqf Act, 1995.

"It vests unchecked authority in the Central government over the administration of the Waqf Board, thereby infringing upon the rights guaranteed under Articles 25, 26, and 29 of the Constitution," the CPI said.

Several petitions have been filed in the top court, challenging the legislation on various grounds.

The YSRCP led by former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy also moved the top court on Monday. In its plea filed through lawyer Mahfooz Ahsan Nazki, the YSRCP cited "serious constitutional violations" and "failure to address the concerns of the Muslim community".

The inclusion of non-Muslim members under Sections 9 and 14 of the amended Waqf law is seen as interference in the internal functioning of Muslim institutions, it said. The provision undermines the religious character and administrative independence of the Waqf Boards, it said.

More than dozen pleas

A Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna is scheduled to hear on Wednesday more than a dozen petitions, including one filed by the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen MP Asaduddin Owaisi, challenging the constitutional validity of the Waqf law.

Logo, mascot of Khelo India Youth Games 2025 unveiled

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar unveiled the official logo of the Khelo India Youth Games 2025 in Patna on Monday.

Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya unveiled the Games mascot during the programme organised at the Samvad hall of the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Mr. Kumar and Mr. Mandaviya jointly released the theme song of the Youth Games, which will be held in the State for the first time from May 4 to 15.

Mr. Kumar said that it was a matter of great happiness that the Khelo India Youth Games is being organised in Bihar and that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the event in Patna on May 4.

Working groups of taskforce set up by SC to identify causes of students' suicides

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Reviewing previous reports, examining existing laws are also among tasks assigned to working groups

The second meeting of the National Task Force on the Mental Health Concerns of Students and the Prevention of Suicides in Higher Educational Institutions, held here on Saturday, has decided to form three working groups for looking after different tasks assigned to them.

The Union Education Ministry said in a release that the key areas of focus of these working groups include identifying predominant causes leading to student suicides, analysing the effectiveness of existing student welfare and mental health regulations or policies and proposing reforms to strengthen institutional frameworks and create a supportive academic environment.

Academic pressure, discrimination, financial burdens, and the stigma surrounding mental health are considered as predominant causes for student suicides. Compiling and reviewing previous reports, examining existing laws, and developing a methodology for designing questionnaires are also the tasks assigned to the working groups.

The Supreme Court constituted the National Task Force under the chairmanship of Justice S. Ravindra Bhat, former Supreme Court judge, along with other experts from various domains as members, to discuss and deliberate on issues related to mental health concerns among students, the prevention of suicides in educational institutions, and to recommend preventive measures.

During the meeting, actions taken so far were reported and discussed in detail. Agenda points included developing a portal/website for data collection; reports and regulations/guidelines; dissemination of questionnaires; gathering support from different sectors; onboarding of officers from the Department of School Education and Literacy and Union Health Ministry; coordination with institutions, among others.

TH CROSSWORD + 14459

(set by Arden)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY

Across

1 Running after businesses for protection (6)
4 A helmsman crossing stream, here in Texas (8)
10 Confines credit notes - keen to succeed (9)
11 Country in between Argentina, Uruguay (5)
12 Polite, set to drink essentially one peg (7)
13 Anteater can hide perhaps (7)
14 Radical but some recovery from heart-lung machine (5)
15 Chasing records? Go hang it (8)
18 Wine bottles - sell contents in the cupboard (8)
20 Satellite carrying essential cargo - one's slow (5)
23 Flowing stream, I follow the experts (7)
25 Do wear a hat - it could be felt (7)
26 Oscar, say, nowadays filled with action (5)
27 Visionaries have plans to acquire bank (9)
28 Rule allows the odd dress - do it all over again (8)
29 Home bird put in jail (6)

Down

1 Lot of noise over club's indifference (8)
2 Ministers can't be sacked accepting bribe at the centre (7)
3 Straight away active - follow inner layer (2,3,4)
5 Side dish prepared atop homesteads (6,8)
6 Managed church property (5)
7 Randomly slept around without stop - refuse to wash (7)
8 Witty judge missing as one could see (6)
9 In short, Indian daily allowing to take shower - part of child rearing (6,8)
16 Simon Cole used a key (9)
17 Physically at home, each issue follows (2,6)
19 Stone setter came up with real rough diamonds (7)
21 It's even free, provide a reprint (7)
22 Reduce time span, girl to expose all of them (6)
24 Some closed items gave rise to surges (5)

SUDOKU

				8				2
8			9				4	
		6		2	7			9
6				7			2	
	4	5				7	8	
	1			4				5
5			4	3		9		
	2				5			4
3				6				

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No.SS6490 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

P	C	P	T	C	A	I	R	
O	T	H	E	L	L	O	O	R
S	O	U	N	R	R	N	V	
I	M	P	A	S	S	E	P	R
T	I	U	O	E	E	N		
S	A	N	D	P	A	P	E	R
		A		A	E	D	U	
R	I	O	T	G	U	N	L	I
E	M	E	O	T				
F	A	I	N	T	V	I	C	E
I	S	U	E	A	L	A		
N	O	S	T	R	I	L	F	L
E	I	N	I	T	A	T	A	
R	O	O	T	E	R	S	A	C
Y	N	R	T	N	H	R	K	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

8	3	5	9	2	4	7	6	1
4	2	6	5	1	7	8	3	9
1	7	9	8	6	3	2	5	4
7	6	8	1	4	9	5	2	3
5	9	4	7	3	2	6	1	8
2	1	3	6	8	5	9	4	7
9	5	2	3	7	1	4	8	6
6	4	1	2	9	8	3	7	5
3	8	7	4	5	6	1	9	2

FAITH

Blessed Baisakhi

In Punjab, Baisakhi is of tremendous cultural, religious, social and spiritual significance at myriad levels. It demonstrates the rich heritage of the people of Punjab, said Prof. Kumool Abbi.

Baisakhi holds special significance for the Sikhs; historically, it marks the birth of the Khalsa order by Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, on April 13, 1699. During that time, Punjab reeled under religious persecution and tyranny of the Moghul rule. After the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur for refusing to convert to Islam under the order of Moghul emperor Aurangzeb, Guru Gobind Singh became the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. He initiated the formation of the new order of the Khalsa (meaning pure) at Takht Keshgarh Sahib on Baisakhi by baptising the five *punj pyaras* (volunteers) with the sacred nectar. He asked them to partake amrit from the same bowl, to emphasise egalitarianism and lack of discrimination of the new religion on the basis of caste, creed or gender. The baptised were given the title of Singh or lion. They had to adorn the five Ks: kesh, kangha, kacha, kada and kirpan on their person. The inclusive and pluralistic philosophy of the Khalsa order urged them to be valiant, selfless warriors.

To commemorate the occasion, people pay their obeisance in Gurdwaras, partaking the sacramental karha prasad and langar (community kitchen). The festival of Baisakhi carries forward the robust, resilient spirit and vitality of the Punjabiyat. Baisakhi marks the first day of the month of Vaisakh and is traditionally celebrated on the thirteenth or fourteenth of April. Traditionally, it synchronises with the celebration of spring harvest in north India.

INBRIEF

India to ship 40,000 tonnes of shrimp to U.S. on tariff halt

India's seafood exporters are preparing to ship 35,000-40,000 tonnes of shrimp to the U.S. with orders remaining stable after President Donald Trump paused a planned 26% reciprocal tariff, reducing the duty to 10%, industry officials said on Monday. "There is a lot of relief now as we are at par with other exporters to the U.S. Now the shipments that were held back will be processed," said Seafood Exporters Association of India Secretary General K. N. Raghavan. PTI

Dr. Reddy's denies workforce cost reduction exercise

Pharma major Dr. Reddy's Laboratories has denied it has embarked on an exercise aimed at a 25% workforce cost reduction. The company on Monday evening dismissed a media report which, citing sources, said the Hyderabad headquartered generic drugmaker, as part of a 25% workforce cost-cutting exercise, had asked several employees drawing relatively high salaries, especially many of those earning over ₹1 crore annually, to resign.

Inventory of affordable homes falls 19%: Anarock

Unsold housing inventory declined to 5,59,808 units at the end of March 2025 from 5,80,895 units in the year-ago period across seven major cities, data by real estate consultant Anarock showed. The seven cities are Delhi-NCR, Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Pune. As per the data, the number of unsold homes, costing less than ₹40 lakh each, fell 19% to 1,12,744 units at March-end from 1,39,905 in the year ago. PTI

'Wealthy Indians are under reporting their income to avoid taxes'

A paper by Delhi School of Economics director Ram Singh points to anomalies and assesses how their income fares against their wealth

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Dodging the taxman

Decreasing trend in income-wealth ratio persists for all versions of income reported to tax authorities, states the paper

- This includes the income reported as taxable and the total income declared
- In richest households, the relative share of reported income against wealth shrinks even further
- For a family listed in the 2021 Forbes richest Indians list, the study estimates that income is a mere 1/12th of wealth

A paper studying national accounts – and sampling asset disclosures by Lok Sabha MPs – found rich Indians are likely under-reporting their income, raising the possibility that income inequality in India is starker than previous studies may have indicated. The paper by Delhi School of Economics director Ram Singh finds that "the wealthier a household is, the smaller the income it reports relative to its wealth".

It is not uncommon for affluent individuals' wealth, such as fixed assets and long-term capital investments, to relatively outgrow their income.

But data from the national accounts, income tax statistics from the Central Board of Direct Taxes, and election candidate filings show that "a 1% increase in family wealth is associated with a more than 0.6% decrease in the reported income-wealth ratio," the paper says.

"The decreasing trend in the income-wealth ratio persists for all versions of income reported to tax authorities, namely the income reported as taxable and the total income declared, including capital income." The paper was published in the May 2025 edition of the International Association of Research in Income and Wealth's Review of Income and Wealth. Going to the richest households, the relative share of reported income against wealth shrinks even further. For a family listed in the 2021 Forbes richest Indians list, the study estimates that income is a mere 1/12th of wealth. This, Mr. Singh says, is likely indicative of income concealment, likely to avoid taxes.

The result has been a regressive taxation structure, where the effective income tax rates actually reduce the richer an individual gets. The data throws up anomalies: namely, while an increase in ownership of equity shares results in a comparable boost in income as well as wealth, an increase in ownership of agricultural land and commercial property decreases the ratio.

This should not be happening, Mr. Singh points out, as "rental yields" are nearly always better than equity dividends. "Absent tax evasion, these results would seem counter-intuitive," the paper says, pointing out what appears to be, specifically, under-reporting of farm rent income, and abuse of farmland ownership by declaring farm income to escape taxation.

Lok Sabha MP affidavits were studied because they may represent a socially representative dataset. Here, too, Mr. Singh found signs of similar abuse. One curious exception was candidates with a serious chance of winning, whose disclosures showed fewer signs of under-reporting: "That the reported ratios increase with vote share also implies that media and official scrutiny have a more pronounced effect on the reporting of income relative to wealth," he wrote.

Lodha brothers settle trademark row under 'parental guidance'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Real estate tycoons Lodha brothers and the companies headed by them, which were locked in a trademark violation dispute, have 'amicably' resolved all outstanding disputes 'under the guidance of their parents', both sides said in their statements.

As per the Bombay High Court-directed mediation process, Macrotech Developers Ltd., (MDL) headed by elder brother Abhishek Lodha, is the owner of, and has the exclusive right to use the brand names Lodha and Lodha Group.

"Abhinandan Lodha is the owner of, and has the exclusive right to use the brand name House of Abhinandan Lodha (HoABL)," according to the statement. While Abhinandan Lodha has no rights or claims in the Lodha Group or MDL or other businesses of elder brother Abhishek Lodha, the latter too has no rights or claims in HoABL or other businesses of Abhinandan Lodha, the statement added.

"Both Abhishek and Abhinandan express their heartfelt gratitude to Justice R.V. Raveendran (retd.), whose guidance in the mediation process was invaluable. The family is grateful to the Justice Arif Doctor for encouraging them to follow the process of mediation," the statement said.

Growth in demand for diesel falls to the lowest since COVID

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Electric vehicles are starting to reshape the diesel demand in India. SUDHAKARA JAIN

Growth in demand for diesel, India's most consumed petroleum product, fell to its lowest since the pandemic in the financial year ended March 31 as the economy expands at a slower pace and consumption shifts to cleaner fuels.

Diesel consumption rose 2% to 91.4 million tonnes in 2024-25 (April 2024 to March 2025) fiscal, according to provisional data released by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the Oil Ministry.

The growth in demand for diesel, which is used to power trucks and farm machinery, in 2024-25 was slower than 4.3% in the previous fiscal and 12.1% in 2022-23. Diesel accounts for about 40% of oil used in India. Softness in demand growth mirrors economic activity in the country.

But more than the economy, it is electric vehicles (EVs) which are starting to reshape diesel demand in India. Industry officials said diesel still powers three-fourth of India's transport sector but the growth is moderating due to the EV shift. The slower consumption rise compared with petrol was largely due to the commercial EV shift.

Electric buses are being rapidly adopted in cities like Delhi and Mumbai, and electric auto-rickshaws (e-rickshaws) have become dominant in many tier-2 and tier-3 cities, directly cutting diesel use in urban public transport.

Also, companies like Amazon, Flipkart, and BigBasket are switching their delivery fleets to EVs. This shift primarily affects diesel-driven vans and light commercial vehicles (LCVs), reducing demand in the logistics sector.

Petrol consumption rose 7.5% to 40 million tonnes while LPG demand was up 5.6% to 31.32 million tonnes. Reflecting boom in the aviation sector, jet fuel consumption was up nearly 9% at about 9 million tonnes in 2024-25.

Overall, petroleum production consumption in India was up 21% at 239.171 million tonnes. This growth was slower than the 5% rise in 2023-24, 10.6% in the preceding year and 3.8% in 2021-22. Oil consumption growth in 2024-25 was the slowest in a decade if the two COVID-marred years of 2019-20 and 2020-21 are excluded. During 2019-20 and 2020-21, oil demand fell as the country was under lockdown in most parts to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

Tariffs not good, we are for free trade, says VW's Arora

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Tough ride: Piyush Arora. (Right) Tiguan R-Line SUV priced at ₹49 lakh (ex showroom introductory price). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Though U.S. President Donald Trump has paused "reciprocal tariffs" on about 70 countries for 90 days and the U.S. and China are engaged in a tariff war, a top official of European auto giant Volkswagen Group said such measures were against free trade and would disrupt global supply chains.

"Volkswagen group has exposure to many geographies even China and North America. The U.S. is one of the major markets, so of course it will have an impact on our group globally, This will be more on some brands and less on others," Piyush Arora, MD & CEO, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Pvt. Ltd. told *The Hindu* on the sidelines of Volkswagen India unveiling Tiguan R-Line SUV priced at ₹49 lakh (ex showroom price).

India-EU FTA

"First of all tariffs are not good. As a global company I can say that we are proponents of free trade and from that point of view, we have been always supporting the discussion between India and EU on a free trade agreement (FTA) and we continue to do so," he emphasised.

"But the discussions have not progressed much in the past but may be the present challenges [tariff war] might be a catalyst to hasten those processes. We will have to see how things evolve and get settled. Then we can assess what are the impacts [of the tariff war]," he said.

Mr. Arora, who heads five brands of the Volkswagen Group namely Skoda Auto, Volkswagen, Audi, Porshe and Lamborghini in India and the local manufacturing operations, said as a group in India, it did not export to the U.S. and so, the impact would be subdued.

"Our exports are to 40 different countries, fortunately U.S. is not one of them. I do believe when you have within the group and in global supply chain some amount of disruptions, there would be some impact indirectly which will be coming to us as well in India because today automotive supply chains are free flowing," he pointed out.

"Finally at the end of the day, you have not really de-linked yourself from the geographies.

"Indirect effect would definitely be there but in terms of our exporting cars and our export of parts and components to South East Asia, I think at this point of time, they are not affected," he stated.

Regarding the firm's case against the $1.4 billion tax demand by Indian tax authorities in the Mumbai High Court, he said the group had been conducting business for last two decades in the similar way.

"We abide by the regulations, not only in India but globally as well, and we will continue to do that and we will continue to evaluate the remedies which are available."

Indian tax authorities have charged Volkswagen of wrongly classifying imported parts for 12 years to evade duties.

In FY25, the Group reported 2% growth including local sales and exports.

"I do see while there are signs of not multiple-digit growth which we have seen in the industry in the last 3-4 years, it is moderating but the base is big. So we are looking optimistically though the present uncertainty throws some challenges right now."

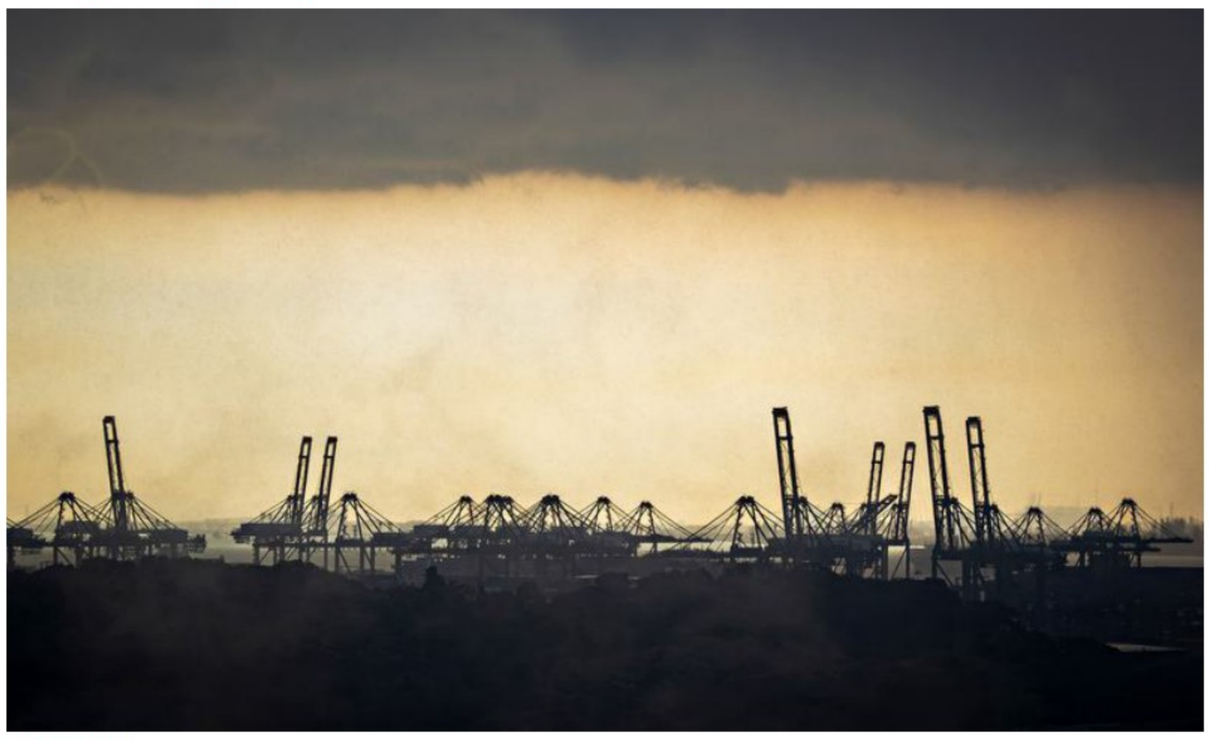
Mr. Arora said the firm's medium-term goal was to gain 5% market share.

He said the Group would need to expand its portfolio not only in the ICE vehicle segment but also in the electric vehicle segment. "We have already started on a journey to identify what product as electric vehicle we can bring into the country."

On Monday Volkswagen introduced Tiguan R-Line, a luxury SUV that would compete with Toyota's Fortuner among others.

Deliveries will start from April 23.

Tariffs singe city-state



Dark outlook: A general view as gantry cranes at Pasir Panjang Port Terminal in Singapore. The recent imposition of universal tariffs by U.S., including a 10% baseline tariff on Singapore's exports, has disrupted trade flows and weakened external demand. Singapore is particularly vulnerable to these shifts as a small, open economy with outward-oriented sectors such as manufacturing and wholesale trade. GETTY IMAGES

JSW Paints, Indigo Paints lead race for Akzo Nobel's India business unit

Abhishek Law
NEW DELHI

Prize catch: Akzo Nobel, known for its Dulux brand, holds a 10% share in the country's paint market. REUTERS

JSW Paints and Hemant Jalan's Indigo Paints, now backed by PE firm Advent International, have emerged as the top two contenders for the India business of Dutch paintmaker Akzo Nobel, post a top-level meeting held last week. Pidilite Industries is a distant third while PE fund Blackstone has opted out of the race, sources told *businessline*.

Binding bids from all the three are expected by the "end of April" or in the last-but-one week of the month. Akzo Nobel, known for its Dulux brand, holds a 10% share in the country's paint market, ranking fourth behind Asian Paints and Berger Paints (which together account for over 75%) and Kansai Nerolac.

The Dutch major initiated a strategic review of its profitable India unit last year, putting the decorative paints, industrial coatings, and related manufacturing assets up for sale. The move reflects Akzo's intent to refocus resources amid intense competition in India's $8-billion paint industry. Last week, Akzo Nobel NV CEO Grégoire Poux-Guillaume visited India to meet representatives of JSW Paints, Indigo Paints and Pidilite. "The discussions were productive and we expect final offers within one to two weeks," a source said.

Akzo Nobel declined to comment, and neither JSW Paints nor Indigo Paints responded to queries.

Under consideration are decorative paints and industrial coatings business of the firm and related manufacturing assets. The India unit is listed on the domestic bourses with a market capitalisation of ₹16,000 crore.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

Cyient bags Norway hydrogen project deal

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Intelligent engineering solutions provider Cyient has bagged a contract forming part of a hydrogen production and distribution facility at Langstranda in Bodø of Norway.

It will support GreenH Bodø in the development and execution of the facility, which in turn is part of a joint venture between Norwegian company GreenH and Hamburg, Germany-based independent asset manager Luxcara.

Cyient said the scope of its work, under the contract, includes providing comprehensive owner's engineering and detailed plant engineering services.

The firm will leverage its experience in green and renewable energy engineering, including green hydrogen towards optimising project delivery and enhancing efficiency through the lifecycle of the project, Cyient said.

"With Cyient's expertise, we will complete the detailed engineering of our hydrogen plant and provide the basis for procurement, construction and installation of our first facility for production and direct bunkering of green hydrogen," GreenH COO Espen Lied said. The Norwegian company develops infrastructure for production and distribution of green hydrogen from renewable energy.

Cyient Norway managing director Espen Berg said in a statement, "we are proud to have received a large order for engineering delivery of the world's first-of-its-kind green hydrogen production for maritime transport."

DUBAI

U.S. air strikes killed at least seven persons in Yemen, say Houthis

REUTERS

Suspected U.S. air strikes around Yemen's rebel-held capital killed at least seven people and wounded 29 overnight, the Houthis said on Monday as they also claimed shooting down another American MQ-9 Reaper drone. Since its start nearly a month ago, the intense campaign of U.S. airstrikes has killed over 120 people. AP

JAKARTA

Qatar set to invest $2 billion in Indonesia sovereign wealth fund

REUTERS

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto said Qatar is set to invest $2 billion in his country's new sovereign wealth fund as he looks to boost economic growth. He said on Sunday he had a "productive" meeting with Qatar Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and that the country would invest in the Danantara Indonesia fund. AFP

KATHMANDU

Nepal's former king 'saddened' by violent pro-monarchy protests

AFP

Nepal's former king has expressed sorrow over last month's violent demonstrations by pro-monarchy supporters while lending tacit support to their participants in his first public statement on the protests. Gyanendra Shah was deposed in 2008 at the end of the Himalayan republic's decade-long civil war. AFP

BUDAPEST

Hungary passes legislation to ban public events by LGBTQ+

AFP

Hungary's Parliament on Monday passed an amendment to the constitution that allows the government to ban public events by LGBTQ+ communities. The amendment, which required a two-thirds vote, passed along party lines with 140 votes for and 21 against. AP

Protectionism 'leads nowhere', says Xi, as he begins Southeast Asia tour

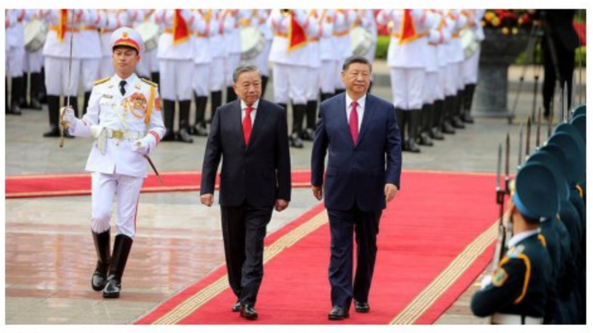
China's President called for 'resolutely safeguarding the multilateral trading system, stable global supply chains, and open and cooperative international environment'; he is visiting Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia on his first foreign trip of 2025

Agence France-Presse
HANOI

Chinese leader Xi Jinping warned that protectionism "leads nowhere" and that a trade war would have "no winners", state media said, as he arrived in Vietnam on Monday on the first leg of a Southeast Asia tour.

Mr. Xi will visit Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia on his first overseas trip of the year as Beijing seeks to tighten regional trade ties and offset the impact of huge tariffs unleashed by his U.S. counterpart Donald Trump.

A line of well-wishers stood outside the Vietnamese capital's airport waving Chinese flags as Mr. Xi arrived in Hanoi for the start of a tour that Beijing says "bears major importance" for the broader region.



Tighten ties: Vietnam's top leader To Lam and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Presidential Palace, Vietnam on Monday. REUTERS

He said in a statement reported by China's *Xinhua news agency* soon after his arrival that he looked forward to an "in-depth exchange of views with Vietnamese leaders on issues concerning ties between the two parties and countries that have a global impact".

After he met Vietnam's top leader To Lam, the two countries signed dozens of cooperation agreements.

Mr. Xi earlier urged the two countries to "resolutely safeguard the multilateral trading system, stable global industrial and supply chains, and open and cooperative international environment". He also reiterated Beijing's line that a "trade war and tariff war will produce no winner, and protectionism will lead nowhere" in an article published on Monday in Vietnam's major state-run *Nhan Dan newspaper*.

'Ready to join hands'

Mr. Lam said in an article posted on the government's news portal on Monday that his country "is always ready to join hands with China to make cooperation between the two countries more substantive, profound, balanced and sustainable".

Vietnam was Southeast Asia's biggest buyer of Chinese goods in 2024, with a bill of $161.9 billion, followed by Malaysia with Chinese imports worth $101.5 billion.

After Vietnam, Mr. Xi will visit Malaysia from Tuesday to Thursday.

Malaysian Communications Minister Fahmi Fadzil said Mr. Xi's visit was "part of the government's efforts... to see better trade relations with various countries including China".

Mr. Xi will then travel on Thursday to Cambodia, one of China's staunchest allies in Southeast Asia.

Will release hostages if end to Gaza war guaranteed: Hamas

Agence France-Presse
CAIRO

Hamas officials left Cairo on Monday after negotiations with mediators from Egypt and Qatar

A senior Hamas official said on Monday that the Palestinian group is prepared to release all Israeli hostages in exchange for a "serious prisoner swap" and guarantees that Israel will end the war in Gaza.

Hamas left Cairo on Monday after negotiations with mediators from Egypt and Qatar – two nations working alongside the United States to broker a ceasefire in the besieged territory.

"We are ready to release all Israeli captives in exchange for a serious prisoner swap deal, an end to the war, the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and the entry of humanitarian aid," Taher al-Nunu, a senior Hamas official said. However, he accused Israel of obstructing progress towards a ceasefire.

"The issue is not the number of captives," Mr. Nunu said, "but rather that the occupation is reneging on its commitments, blocking the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and continuing the war".

"Hamas has therefore stressed the need for guarantees to compel the occupation [Israel] to uphold the agreement," he added.

Israeli news website *Ynet* reported on Monday that a new proposal had been put to Hamas. Under the deal, the group would release 10 living hostages in exchange for U.S. guarantees that Israel would enter negotiations for a second phase of the ceasefire.

The first phase of the ceasefire, which began on January 19 and included multiple hostage-prisoner exchanges, lasted two months before disintegrating.

Efforts towards a new truce have stalled, reportedly over disputes regarding the number of hostages to be released by Hamas, with 58 people still held in the Palestinian territory.

Pointing to those failed negotiations, Israeli campaign group the Hostages and Missing Families Forum said it was against talks aimed at phased hostage releases.

Meanwhile, Mr. Nunu said that Hamas would not disarm, a key condition that Israel has set for ending the war.

12 French officials told to leave Algeria

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

Fresh tensions flared between France and Algeria on Monday as the French Foreign Minister said its former colony had ordered 12 French officials to leave in 48 hours.

The announcement was linked to the arrest of three Algerian nationals in France, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said.

For decades, ties between France and Algeria have gone through diplomatic upheavals, and Monday's announcement comes at a delicate time in relations and underscores the difficulties in repairing ties.

"I am asking Algerian authorities to abandon these expulsion measures," Mr. Barrot said, adding: "If the decision to send back our officials is maintained, we will have no other choice but to respond immediately."

The 12 authorities include some members of the French Interior Ministry, a diplomatic source said.

Pakistan urges Iran to probe killing of 8

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

Islamabad has sought Tehran's "full cooperation" over the killing of eight Pakistani nationals in restive southeastern Iran, officials said Monday.

The Pakistani Foreign Ministry said in a statement the killing happened on Saturday in Mehrestan County in Sistan and Baluchistan province, about 230 km from the Pakistan-Iran border, urging a thorough investigation.

Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran, Muhammad Mudassir, wrote on X that the eight were labourers and that Islamabad.

There has been no immediate claim of responsibility. The Baluch regions across Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan have faced an insurgency by Baluch nationalists seeking independence for more than two decades.

Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemned on Monday the killings and extended condolences to the Pakistani people and government.

A reminder of the 'beauty' of life in death

Sudipta Datta

In a COVID-19 anthology, *And We Came Outside and Saw the Stars Again*, in which 50 writers from around the world responded to the rampaging virus, Mario Vargas Llosa wondered why it is difficult for mankind "to accept that all of life's beauty belong ultimately to death, and that at any moment it may all come to an end". For the Peruvian master of letters, the end came on April 13. He was 89 years old.

Journalist, essayist, novelist, politician, controversial commentator - Llosa wore many hats, but he is best known for some of the great novels of the 20th and early 21st century *The Time of the Hero*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, *Conversations in the Cathedral*, *The War of the End of the World* and *The Feast of the Goat*. His works, totalling more than 50, chronicled the myriad social, cultural and political strands of Latin American life with rich imagery and language. His protagonists often stood up to authoritarianism, and faced defeat despite the resistance.

MARIO VARGAS LLOSA
(1936-2025)

His attempts to marry while still a minor got a hilarious makeover in *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*. Llosa wrote about 'Aunt Julia', 13 years his senior and a divorcee, whom he married – and later divorced – in his memoir, *A Fish in the Water*, translated by Helen Lane. When he proposed marriage to Julia, she began by "telling me just what I expected she would: that this was madness". But in the same breath, she also said "she loved me and that if I were that mad, she was too. And that we should get married right away".

After their marriage in 1955, he moved to Paris in 1959 to pursue a career as a language teacher, journalist and writer. After his return to Lima in the 1970s, he began teaching at universities all over the Americas. In 1990, Llosa decided to run for the presidency of Peru, leading a campaign for economic reform and a vow to end the ways of the Shining Path rebels.

He lost to Alberto Fujimori and he candidly summed it up thus in his memoir: "I don't believe I succeeded in putting across" the ideas of the Freedom Movement that took shape in painter Fernando de Szyszlo's studio. Critics didn't mince words about Llosa's neo-liberal political "misadventure".

In 2010, the Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Llosa "for his cartography of structures of power and his trenchant images of the individual's resistance, revolt, and defeat".

Though an intensely private person, he often raked up controversy with his remarks, be it on Latin American politics or women. He famously fell out with Gabriel García Marquez in the mid-1970s, with a punch, before making up with the writer years later. The story goes, perhaps not apocryphal, that a lady was involved, though Llosa once said it was to do with his disenchantment with Fidel Castro's brand of politics in Cuba. Marquez was a life-long Castro supporter.

With Llosa's passing, the last of the triumvirate of Latin America's literary new wave that included Marquez and the Mexican great Carlos Fuentes, is gone.

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SAFE HANDS

Dhoni crosses 200 dismissals in the IPL with another stellar show

AP

M.S. Dhoni tops the list with 201 dismissals (155 catches, 46 stumpings) in the IPL, the first player to cross the 200-mark. Dinesh Karthik (182), A.B. de Villiers (126), Robin Uthappa (124) and Wriddhiman Saha (118) complete the top five. Virat Kohli is in the sixth spot with 116.

GAME-CHANGER

Dhoni wins PoM award for the 18th time, draws level with Kohli

SANDEEP SAXENA

M.S. Dhoni pulled level with Virat Kohli by winning the Player-of-the-Match award for the 18th time in the IPL. Among Indians, Rohit Sharma tops the charts with 19 while Yusuf Pathan (16) and Ravindra Jadeja (16) share the third spot. Dhoni had last won a PoM award in 2019 against Delhi Capitals in Chennai.

BIG LEAGUE

Sunrisers include Smaran in place of the injured Zampa

FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

Sunrisers Hyderabad has signed Karnataka batter R. Smaran in place of the injured Adam Zampa for the remainder of IPL 2025. The 21-year-old Smaran has played seven First Class games, 10 List A matches and six T20s. He has two centuries each in First Class and List A cricket and joins Sunrisers for ₹30 lakh.

HUGE BLOW

PBKS pacer Ferguson likely to miss the rest of the IPL season

SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

In a huge blow to Punjab Kings, pacer Lockie Ferguson is highly unlikely to play for the rest of IPL 2025. He pulled up the side of his left leg while bowling during Punjab's away game against Sunrisers Hyderabad and is indefinitely out, the team's assistant coach James Hopes said ahead of the match against KKR.

Dhoni, Dube keep cool as CSK snaps losing streak

The skipper turns the clock back in a match-winning stand with the southpaw; the visiting team's bowlers and fielders come up with a much-improved show to restrict LSG to 166

IPL-18

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
LUCKNOW

It was as if, after many tugs at its starter cord, a motor had finally roared into life, the way Chennai Super Kings bowled, fielded, and batted to beat Lucknow Super Giants by five wickets in the IPL at the Ekana Stadium here on Monday. CSK had seemed a spent campfire coming into the match.

Its fans had begun exhibiting signs of a hard life. So, when Rahul Tripathi took a brilliant running catch to dismiss LSG opener Aiden Markram off Khaleel Ahmed, it seemed he had clutched at a lifeline rather. It was as if CSK had shaken itself awake. The players were astir. The supporters, who'd filled the stands, were bucked up.

Vital dismissal

CSK followed it up with Nicholas Pooran's early dismissal. Dhoni the captain played a hand in it.

After a six and a four in the fourth over, he'd packed the off-side with six fielders – behind and in front of square – for Pooran to try and play the ball on the leg side and miss it. Anshul Kamboj got him, leg-before, on review.

Opener Mitchell Marsh (30), who was threatening to get out of hand with two fours and two sixes, pulled and missed a ball that wasn't short enough and skidded in, to be bowled off Ravindra Jadeja.

Captain Rishabh Pant's 49-ball 63 (4x4, 4x6) helped LSG to a competitive total from there.

With the bat, when its openers Shaik Rasheed (27) and Rachin Ravindra (37) racked up 52 off 29 balls, it seemed as if CSK had its scheme of life worked out to a fine point. But soon it imploded to a point where Shivam Dube (43 n.o.) and Dhoni (26 n.o.) were faced with an equation of 56 off 30 balls.

One-handed six

Dhoni, who edged a couple of streaky fours, hit a one-handed six off Shardul Thakur to the square-leg boundary and sparked life into the chase.

Dube muscled a full toss off a no-ball over third man for a six off Shardul too. Dhoni was dropped by Ravi Bishnoi at cover off Shardul on 20 when CSK required 12 off 10. He hit a full toss for a four to deep mid-wicket off the last ball of that over, to bring down the equation to five off the last over.

The visiting side did that with three balls to spare and ended its five-match losing streak.

Late charge: Dube and Dhoni got their tactics right in the final overs and guided Super Kings home. SANDEEP SAXENA

SCOREBOARD

LUCKNOW SUPER GIANTS
Aiden Markram c Tripathi b Khaleel 6 *(6b, 1x4)*, Mitchell Marsh b Jadeja 30 *(25b, 2x4, 2x6)*, Nicholas Pooran lbw b Kamboj 8 *(9b, 2x4)*, Rishabh Pant c Dhoni b Pathirana 63 *(49b, 4x4, 4x6)*, Ayush Badoni st. Dhoni b Jadeja 22 *(17b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Abdul Samad run out 20 *(11b, 2x6)*, David Miller (not out) 0 *(0b)*, Shardul Thakur c Rasheed b Pathirana 6 *(4b, 1x4)*; Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-1, w-8): 11; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 166.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-6 (Markram, 0.6 overs), 2-23 (Pooran, 3.6), 3-73 (Marsh, 9.3), 4-105 (Badoni, 13.4), 5-158 (Samad, 19.1), 6-158 (Pant, 19.2), 7-166 (Shardul, 19.6).

SUPER KINGS BOWLING
Khaleel 4-0-38-1, Kamboj 3-0-20-1, Overton 2-0-24-0, Jadeja 3-0-24-2, Noor 4-0-13-0, Pathirana 4-0-45-2.

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS
Shaik Rasheed c Pooran b Avesh 27 *(19b, 6x4)*, Rachin Ravindra lbw b Markram 37 *(22b, 5x4)*, Rahul Tripathi c & b Bishnoi 9 *(10b, 1x4)*, Ravindra Jadeja c Markram b Bishnoi 7 *(11b)*, Shivam Dube **(Impact Player for Pathirana)** (not out) 43 *(37b, 3x4, 2x6)*, Vijay Shankar c Avesh b Digvesh 9 *(8b, 1x4)*, M.S. Dhoni (not out) 26 *(11b, 4x4, 1x6)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-8): 10; Total (for five wkts. in 19.3 overs): 168.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-52 (Rasheed, 4.5), 2-74 (Rachin, 7.6), 3-76 (Tripathi, 8.5), 4-96 (Jadeja, 12.2), 5-111 (Vijay Shankar, 14.6).

SUPER GIANTS BOWLING
Shardul 4-0-56-0, Akash 1-0-13-0, Digvesh 4-0-23-1, Avesh 3.3-0-32-1, Bishnoi **(Impact Player for Marsh)** 3-0-18-2, Markram 4-0-25-1.

Toss: CSK.
PoM: Dhoni.
CSK won by five wickets with three balls to spare.

Next assignment

LSG: April 19 vs **RR**
Jaipur, 7.30 p.m.

CSK: April 20 vs **MI**
Mumbai, 7.30 p.m.

Points table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Gujarat Titans	6	4	2	8	1.081
Delhi Capitals	5	4	1	8	0.899
Royal Challengers	6	4	2	8	0.672
Lucknow Super Giants	7	4	3	8	0.086
Kolkata Knight Riders	6	3	3	6	0.803
Punjab Kings	5	3	2	6	0.065
Mumbai Indians	6	2	4	4	0.104
Rajasthan Royals	6	2	4	4	-0.838
Sunrisers Hyderabad	6	2	4	4	-1.245
Chennai Super Kings	7	2	5	4	-1.276

** Till the LSG-CSK match on April 14*

Mhatre to replace injured Ruturaj

Big opportunity: Mhatre will be keen to make an impact.
FILE PHOTO: VIJAY SONEJI

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Chennai Super Kings has picked Mumbai batter Ayush Mhatre as replacement for the injured Ruturaj Gaikwad for the rest of the IPL-18 season.

The CSK skipper suffered a hairline fracture on his right elbow after getting hit while batting against Rajasthan Royals at Guwahati on March 30.

Ruturaj played two more games against Delhi Capitals and Punjab Kings but was ruled out of the tournament before the clash against Kolkata Knight Riders last Friday.

Mhatre will be available for CSK's match against Mumbai Indians on April 20. He will join the former champion at a base price of ₹30 lakh.

Earlier this month, the Super Kings had called a couple of domestic cricketers, including Mhatre, for trials in Chennai and has now decided to take a punt on the aggressive youngster to add some much-needed batting firepower to its line-up.

The batter had an impressive start to his domestic career last year, scoring 458 runs in seven matches in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, including two centuries and a highest of 181.

He was equally impressive in the Ranji Trophy, scoring 504 runs from nine outings and slamming two hundreds. Mhatre, however, is yet to play in a domestic T20 game.

PBKS looks to better home record as KKR comes calling

Sahil Mathur
NEW CHANDIGARH

Punjab Kings is yet to fully adopt Maharaja Yadavindra Singh International Cricket Stadium as its home. The team has only registered two wins from seven games it has played here in the IPL. The Shreyas Iyer-led side will hope to improve its home record when it hosts Kolkata Knight Riders on Tuesday.

Punjab has started the season well with three wins from five games but would hope to sort out its bowling woes. With an injured Lockie Ferguson unavailable, Punjab will make at least one change in the eleven.

The bowlers have conceded runs throughout the innings, including the experienced Yuzvendra Chahal. Having bowled most of his overs in the second half of the innings, Shreyas could bring the leg-spinner early, starting this game.

PBKS has tried to balance its lacklustre bowling with aggressive batting, which has worked so far. The top three – Priyansh Arya, Prabhsimran Singh, and Shreyas Iyer – have consistently provided a solid platform, helping Punjab post competitive totals. How the Kings' batters perform against KKR's spinners could decide the way this game might go.

Sunil Narine and Varun Chakaravarthy have been tough to hit and are coming into this game on the high of a dominant performance against Chennai Super Kings. Pace bowlers Vaibhav Arora and Harshit Rana have done the support act right, extracting swing and bounce with the new ball.

Kolkata's batters will aim to maintain a high scoring rate through the middle overs, and Punjab's out-of-form spin attack could offer them the perfect opportunity to do so.

Taking aim: Arshdeep will be keen to provide early breakthroughs for Punjab. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Today's match

PUNJAB KINGS vs KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS

New Chandigarh, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: **33**
PBKS **12** | KKR **21**

PREVIOUS MEETING
PBKS won by eight wickets, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIOHOTSTAR

'It was all about preparing well and waiting for my chance'

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

From scoring a Test triple ton for India in 2016 to falling out of favour in Karnataka's domestic set-up in 2022, Karun Nair's career has had a stark mix of dizzying highs and dispiriting lows.

The disappointments could have made a lesser player fade into oblivion, but the 33-year-old has persisted and taken the "one more chance" that he exhorted cricket to give in a viral social media post three years ago.

His career has seen a sharp upturn in the past few months, racking up a pile of runs for Vidarbha in domestic cricket to once again merit the attention of the national selectors.

On the basis of his sublime showing for Delhi Capitals against Mumbai Indians in the IPL on Sunday, that trajectory is at no risk of flattening anytime soon.

In his first IPL game in three years, his knock of 89 off 40 balls at the Arun Jaitley Stadium nearly took DC to victory in a run chase of 206.

That he was returning to the high-profile T20 league after a long gap didn't affect his mindset.

"I had the confidence that I have played before and I knew how it was going to be.

"I felt like I am well-prepared to play in the IPL if given the opportunity," Karun told reporters.

"It was all about preparing the way I have all through the season and waiting for my chance. I was doing my bit to be ready for the game."

Karun didn't even spare Jasprit Bumrah. In the pacer's first two overs, which leaked 29 runs, Karun slammed three fours and two sixes.

"I was in the flow. It was about picking the right balls and playing to the areas I wanted to play. Bumrah is the best bowler in world cricket. But I just backed myself."

Back with a bang: Karun made a sensational return to the IPL after a gap of almost three years. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

INBRIEF

Ju on verge of defending title after fourth straight win

China's Ju Wenjun overcame the challenge of her Chinese compatriot Tan Zhongyi in the eighth game of the FIDE Women's World Championship Match 2025 in Chongqing on Monday to post her fourth consecutive victory and is now just half a point away from defending her title. The defending champion leads 6-2 with the challenger Tan needing to win the next four to force a tie-break. Playing white pieces in the eighth game, Ju won in 53 moves.

Hulkenberg disqualified for excessive skid block wear

Sauber's Nico Hulkenberg was disqualified from Sunday's Bahrain Grand Prix for excessive wear of his car's skid block, the second such breach by a Formula One team in the last three races. The German had finished 13th but stewards found that the wooden plank under the car was below the minimum thickness of 9mm. Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton was disqualified at last month's Chinese Grand Prix for the same reason.

Dhiraj bags individual bronze in Archery World Cup Stage 1

India wrapped up its campaign in the Archery World Cup Stage 1 at Auburndale (USA) with four medals, including a bronze by rising star Dhiraj Bommadevara in the individual recurve category. The 23-year-old Army archer Dhiraj showed exceptional grit and composure to clinch the bronze medal match, bouncing back from a 2-4 deficit to beat Andres Temino Mediel of Spain 6-4 in a tense five-setter on Sunday.

Indian boys go down to Iran, finish 12th

The Indian boys team lost 1-2 to Iran in the playoff match for the 11th place in the Asia-Oceania WJT under-14 tennis championship in Kuching, Malaysia, on Monday. Japan won the title beating Kazakhstan 2-0 in the final. The top four teams, with Korea and Hong Kong as the third and fourth teams, qualified for the World Group competition to be staged later in the season.

The results (playoff for 11th place):
Iran bt India 2-1 (Makan Motlagh lost to Kaustubh Singh 3-6, 1-6; Ramtin Boroujeni bt Paranjay Siwach 6-2, 3-0 (retd.); Ramtin & Makan bt Viraj Choudhary & Kaustubh 6-1, 6-3). **Final placings:** 1. Japan, 2. Kazakhstan, 3. Korea, 4. Hong Kong, 5. China, 6. Australia, 7. Chinese Taipei, 8. Thailand, 9. Indonesia, 10. New Zealand, 11. Iran, 12. India, 13. Singapore, 14. Pakistan, 15. Uzbekistan, 16. Sri Lanka.

Archery Association of India forms six-member committee

Archery Association of India (AAI) has formed a six-member committee for the development of the sport in the country. This includes Dronacharya Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Sanjeeva Singh, Purnima Mahato and Jiwanjot Singh Teja, alongside P. Shankaraia and K. Devananda Singh. Cherukuri Satyanarayana, AAI vice-president, will serve as chairman, with joint secretary Sumanta Chandra Mohanty acting as convener.

Tamil Nadu enters both boys and girls' semifinals

Tamil Nadu entered the semifinals in both boys' and girls' sections respectively in the National youth basketball championships in Puducherry.

The results: Quarterfinals: Boys: Haryana bt Telangana 82-67; Delhi bt MP 86-65; Rajasthan bt Punjab 94-56; TN bt UP 82-78. **Girls:** Maharashtra bt Gujarat 86-67; Karnataka bt UP 71-54; TN bt MP 62-40; Chhattisgarh bt Telangana 61-59.

USA and Japan post wins, qualify for BJK Cup Finals

The USA and Japan became the final teams to book their place at the Billie Jean King Cup Finals. They will be heading to Shenzhen in September to join host China, Italy, Ukraine, Spain, Great Britain and Kazakhstan.

LIVE TELECAST

IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioHotstar, 7.30 p.m.
Champions League: Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Wednesday).

McIlroy triumphs amid high drama, completes career Grand Slam

The Northern Irishman gets the better of Rose in a sudden-death playoff and becomes only the sixth golfer to win each of the four Majors

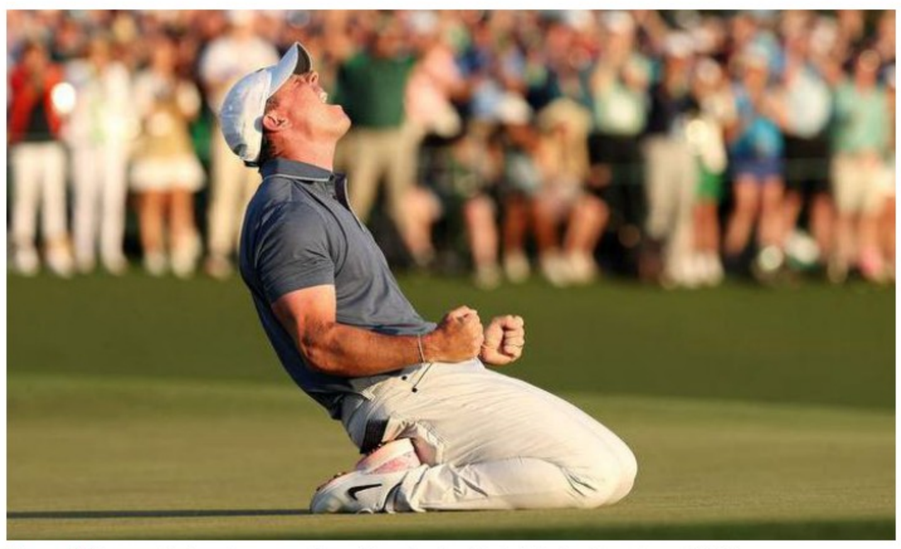
AUGUSTA MASTERS

Reuters
AUGUSTA

Rory McIlroy ended his long wait for a Masters title with a birdie on the opening hole of a sudden-death playoff to beat Justin Rose and claim the career Grand Slam after a nerve-wracking final round on Sunday.

After missing a five-foot par putt at the 18th in regulation that forced the playoff, McIlroy made sure he did not let his latest chance at Major glory slip away and returned to the same hole in the playoff and put his approach two feet from the cup.

When the winning putt dropped, McIlroy raised his arms toward the clear sky and let his putter fall behind him as he dropped to his knees overcome with emotion. McIlroy then embraced his wife Erica and daughter Poppy as chants of "Rory! Rory!" rang out around the green while he made his way toward Butler Cabin to collect the Green Jacket that he almost threw away earlier after a back-nine stumble. "There was a lot of pent-up emotion that just came out on that 18th green," McIlroy said just before slipping on the Green Jacket during the presentation ceremony. "A moment like that makes all the years and all the close calls worth it."



The wait is over: McIlroy is pumped up after winning his first Major since August 2014. GETTY IMAGES

With the win, McIlroy joins Gene Sarazen, Ben Hogan, Gary Player, Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods as the only golfers to win each of the four Major championships. The 35-year-old Northern Irishman arrived at the year's first Major, where in 2011 he blew a four-shot lead on the back nine, seeking his first major since August 2014 to end a barren run that came with its fair share of near misses. For a while late in the closing round it looked like McIlroy was once again headed for Major heartbreak as golfers were trading positions on the leaderboard at mind-bending pace.

Winners of most Majors
(Total, Masters, U.S. Open, British Open, PGA Championship)
1. Jack Nicklaus 18 (6, 4, 3, 5);
2. Tiger Woods 15 (5, 3, 3, 4);
3. Walter Hagen 11 (0, 2, 4, 5);
4. Ben Hogan 9 (2, 4, 1, 2) and Gary Player 9 (3, 1, 3, 2).

Top scores:
277: Rory McIlroy, Justin Rose; **279:** Patrick Reed; **280:** Scottie Scheffler; **281:** Bryson DeChambeau, Im Sung-Jae; **282:** Ludvig Aberg; **283:** Corey Conners, Zach Johnson, Xander Schauffele, Jason Day.

McIlroy's Sunday roar

The 35-year-old went through a gamut of emotions en route the green jacket at the hallowed course

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	TOTAL
Par	4	5	4	3	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	72
Round 4	[6]	5	(3)	(2)	4	3	4	5	(3)	(3)	[5]	3	[7]	[5]	(4)	3	(3)	[5]	73

IN THE PLAYOFF, MCILROY BIRDIED WHILE ROSE FINISHED WITH A PAR

McIlroy and Diamond: a special friendship

Associated Press
AUGUSTA

Rory McIlroy has endured plenty of anguishing moments while seeking to snap a decade-long drought in Major championships.

That made celebrating Sunday's win at the Masters with his caddie and longtime friend Harry Diamond all the more special.

They became friends after meeting on a putting green in Holywood, Northern Ireland, when they were seven-years-old and have remained close since. When McIlroy decided to make a change on his bag in the summer of 2017, he asked Diamond to become his caddie.

Critics questioned the move time and time again, asking whether Diamond was the best man for the job.

But McIlroy stayed staunchly loyal to Diamond and refused to make a change, even though he hadn't won a Major since 2014, before his friend took the job. That made his career Grand Slam-clinching win at the Masters even sweeter.

Close bond: McIlroy has called Diamond 'a massive part' of what he has accomplished. AFP

"We've had so many good times together. He's been like a big brother to me the whole way through my life," McIlroy said as his eyes swelled up with tears. "So to be able to share this with him after all the close calls that we've had, all the crap that he's had to take from people that don't know anything about the game, yeah, this one is just as much his as it is mine."

McIlroy called Diamond "a massive part" of what he's accomplished, which includes 40 worldwide victories and 29 on the PGA Tour.

"I couldn't think of anyone better to share it with than him," McIlroy said.

All set for the Indian Open athletics in Chennai

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

After Sangrur (Punjab), Nadiad (Gujarat) and Ranchi (Jharkhand), the Indian Open athletics caravan has moved to Chennai.

Some of the top names, including Jeswin Aldrin (long jump), Tejas Ashok Shirse (110m hurdles), Amoj Jacob (400m) and Kishore Kumar Jena (javelin), will be the star attractions in the one-day competition to be held at the Nehru Stadium on Tuesday.

The meet is expected to be a training competition for the Federation Cup in Kochi from April 21 to 24.

It is the major selection tournament for the Asian championships in Gumi (South Korea) from May 27 to 31.

Animesh Kujur is one of the prominent and promising young athletes in 100m and 200m.

Up for the challenge: Kujur is one of the promising young athletes entered in both 100m and 200m. FILE PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

The 21-year-old is taking part in both events as part of his preparations for the meet in Kochi.

"This meet was not in my calendar and since the Athletics Federation of India said one has to participate in any one of the Indian Open and Indian Grand Prix, I am taking part.

"I am ready for the competition but my main focus is on the Federation Cup," said Animesh.

Vithya Ramraj said she has done all the hard work and is ready to take part in the 200m and 400m hurdles, but insisted her focus will be on the latter.

Nearly 400 athletes will be in the fray in the competition, more than that of all the previous three meets.

Divya gets the better of Salimova

Sports Bureau

On a day that saw top seed Koneru Humpy being held by compatriot and fifth seed R. Vaishali, Divya Deshmukh proved the lone winner for India in the FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess in Pune.

Divya won against Bulgaria's Nurgyul Salimova. D. Harika went down to second seed Zhu Jiner of China. Except the Humpy-Vaishali encounter, all the games produced decisive results.

The results (first round): Batkhuyag Munguntuul (Mng) bt Salome Melia (Geo); Zhu Jiner (Chn) bt D. Harika; Alina Kashliskaya (Pol) lost to Polina Shuvalova (Rus); Nurgyul Salimova (Bul) lost to Divya Deshmukh; R. Vaishali drew with Koneru Humpy; **Second-round pairings:** Melia v Humpy; Divya v Vaishali; Shuvalova v Salimova; Harika v Kashlinskaya; Munguntuul v Zhu.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Ronaldo FC posts win
BENGALURU: Ronaldo FC defeated Raman Sports 2-1 in a KSFA 'C' division football league outing on Monday.
The results: Balaharkha FC 4 (Daniel 15, Reno 32, Sanju 39, C. Anshid 56) bt Crystal FC 0; Garden City FC 1 (Naveen 57) drew with Yelahanka Camp Boys 1 (Sanjay Jayaraj Nambeesan 11); Gopalan FC 2 (Sivanesh 7, Rubesh 16) bt Technico FF 1 (Siddharth Das 1); Ronaldo FC Bengaluru 2 (A. Vigneshwaran 17, Santosh 37) bt Raman Sports 1 (D. Rahul 42).

Pantsulaia clinches title
Grandmaster (GM) Levan Pantsulaia from Georgia won the second Namma Bengaluru International Open FIDE Rated Blitz Chess Tournament at the Koramangala Indoor Stadium here on Monday. The tournament, organised by The Golden Aura Trust, featured a total prize fund of ₹15 lakh. Pantsulaia, who holds an ELO rating of 2580, took home a cash prize of ₹50,000. Pantsulaia, GM Tornike Sanikidze (ELO 2396), also from Georgia, and GM Pranav Anand (ELO 2386), all scored 9.5 points out of 11 rounds. Final standings were determined on tie-break scores.

On top: Pantsulaia, right, emerged champion on better tie-break score. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

KGA Ladies Amateur Open Championship
The Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) will host the sixth edition of the KGA Ladies Amateur Open Championship from Tuesday to Thursday. With 125 participants – the course's maximum accommodation – the tournament will feature 60 players from outside Bengaluru, representing over 30 clubs nationwide. The tournament will be played in a shotgun format.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE, QUARTERFINALS (2ND LEG) FIXTURES:

Aston Villa vs. PSG and Dortmund vs. Barcelona (Wednesday, 12.30 a.m. IST); Real vs. Arsenal and Inter vs. Bayern (Thursday, 12.30 a.m. IST).

Five new players called up for Indian women's team's tour of Australia

HOCKEY

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Five new players received their first senior national call-ups as Hockey India (HI) on Monday announced a 26-member women's squad for the upcoming five-match tour of Australia, scheduled from April 26 to May 4.

India will take on Australia-A in the first two games, followed by three matches against the senior Australia team in Perth.

Jyoti Singh, Sujata Kujur, Ajmina Kujur, Pooja Yadav and Mahima Tete are the new players.

Chief coach Harendra Singh said: "This tour is an important opportunity for us to test our skills against top-level competition."

The squad: Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam; **Defenders:** Jyoti Singh, Ishika Chaudhary, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Sujata Kujur, Suman Devi Thoudam, Jyoti, Ajmina Kujur, Sakshi Rana. **Midfielders:** Salima Tete (capt.), Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Sharmila Devi, Manisha Chauhan, Sunelita Toppo, Mahima Tete, Pooja Yadav, Lalremsiami; **Forwards:** Navneet Kaur (vice-capt.), Deepika, Rutaja Dadaso Pisal, Mumtaz Khan, Baljeet Kaur, Deepika Soreng, Beauty Dungdung. **Standbyes:** Bansari Solanki (goalkeeper); Anjana Dundung, Lalthantluangi (defenders); Sakshi Shukla, Khaidem Shileima Chanu (midfielders); Dipi Monika Toppo, Sonam (forwards).